

# ARENA



## 아레나 이계사냥기

# ARENA

BOOK 02

*Nicolo*

EPUB CREATION BY LISA HAYES

**Arena**

(아레나)

by

**Nicolo**

(니콜로)

# Synopsis

---

A 29 year old civil employment exam student wakes up in a blank white room and meets a baby angel.

This baby angel informs him that he died in his sleep due to heart disease like his father and grandfather.

Remembering his mom and their last conversation he says that he will take on a series of life and death tests that the baby angel offers him.

From this point on he must put his life on the line and fight in the stage called 'Arena'.

And every time he clears a test he will have the ability to gain abilities and weapons to increase his strength to clear all the tests and get his life back.

This is his story of his fights in the 'Arena'.

# Copyright © 2016 by Lisa Hayes

---

First Edition: October 2016

All rights reserved.

English Translation by Kokuma Translations @ [Kokuma Translations](#)

ePub conversion by Lisa Hayes @ [Hasseno Blog](#)

This is a free eBook. You are free to give it away (in unmodified form) to whomever you wish.

No part of this eBook may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the author.

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.



# Chapter 101 - Corrupt Examinee(s) (Part 1)

---

As expected, Chairman Han Mang-young's treatment was finished after 20 days. Taking into account how long it took to treat Chairman Park Jin-seong, I had figured 20 days would be plenty of time.

Chairman Han Man-young must have been satisfied too because I didn't hear any complaints from his end either.

The important thing for me now was not healing someone else.

Chinese examinees are making a play for me.

They may use dirty tactics, first off I requested aid from Chairman Park Jin-seong.

"I need to ensure the safety of my family."

-I'll leave it to my chief secretary.

After talking to the 3rd office chief secretary Lee Jung-shik, my mom, noona, and Hyun-ji were all going to have a person tailing them to keep an eye out for any trouble.

On the off chance that something bad does happen to my family, I would be notified immediately and other examinees aligned with Jin-seong group would come to help as well.

'For now this should be plenty.'

This was as much as I could do. After this, the problem was up to me.

I had some level of confidence.

The Chinese bastards are bound to look down on me because I'm a 6th turn examinee.

But I have intermediate spirit summons and an absurdly powerful gun shooting ability.

With this much, I can fend off an attack from the average middle

level examinee.

As long as I'm not unexpectedly ambushed and am prepared to counterattack, I can reverse the situation and be the one to beat the corrupt examinees.

Any time I was out, I summoned Sylph and kept her hidden.

Sylph always looked in all directions and kept an eye on me to see if anyone was following me every second.

'If I can check it from my end first, it would give me a great advantage.'

Because it was possible for me to shoot.

As long as I discover the enemy first, I can beat the other one and begin the fight.

Betting on that scheme, I purposely went out every evening.

I went to dark and unpopulated areas so that the bastards would have a lot of good opportunities to approach me.

\*\*\*

"I wonder if there is a need to be this careful."

"If we want to take care of it discretely then there's no other way."

Two middle aged men were conversing in Chinese.

They were sitting at a window seat in a café and were looking at a big condominium across the street.

"If we can't take care of it quietly, it gets complicated. Since this isn't China."

Chinese examinees had a bad reputation for doing all kinds of things for making money.

But the place that they could do whatever was only in China.

From the moment they left China, they hid their identity as

examinees and had to move about quietly.

Because to the foreign examinees, corrupt examinees like themselves were a good target for karma hunting.

When you killed a corrupt examinee, the corrupt examinee's minus karma returned to you as plus karma.

At the very least you could gain the karma equal to clearing one or two exams!

To examinees, there was no hunting target as lucrative as this.

Because of that, the Chinese examinees had to take extra care to hide their identities and move in secret.

It's just better not to step foot on foreign soil.

But this time the circumstances were different.

The target this time was the goose that lays the golden egg. A target absolutely worthy of the risk.....

"Even so, didn't they say the target is just a mere 6th turn examinee?"

"That's why the two of us came. After we capture him without killing him, stowing away and escaping isn't an easy thing to do."

"That is true."

"We can't let our guard down. He has spirit summons and guns."

"It's just a gun."

The short and skinny examinee smirked.

The examinee with a bulging belly reprimanded him for it.

"According to the information we were given, using spirits he has a 100% accuracy rate with his guns. You might not have any worries but I have to be careful."

The two were teammates that worked together in the Arena.

Starting from the 2nd exam, only the two of them had survived

and now their harmony was perfectly in-sync.

“We can just go with our normal routine. I will be the bait that is obviously following him around to get his attention and you can use that time to approach him from his blind spot.”

“It’s going to be difficult to try and not kill him. It limits the poisons we can use.”

The reason these two haven’t died and survived to the 21st exam was because of their individual strengths.

The short examinee had a steel like body along with a defense skill.

The fat examinee could move about without making a sound and a poison kill skill.

Because of that, even though all their other teammates died, these two ultimately survived and became veterans.

Of course, they did give up on the exams after the 17th turn, but surviving to the 21st turn was an incredibly difficult thing to do.

“He’s out.”

Said the fat examinee.

Looking out the window, their target was indeed standing outside the studio apartment. The 6th examinee Korean, Kim Hyun-ho.

“It’s good we didn’t have to wait long. Let’s go.”

The two got up from their seats.

They came out the café and followed Kim Hyun-ho from a far distance.

\*\*\*

‘There they are.’

Sylph had identified the two examinees. Using her special communion skill, she delivered an image of the two to me.



The greatest point of the intermediate spirit summons was this communion.

As if sending an image file through messenger, it was possible to personally give me a simple image straight to mind.

Before, the veteran elf warrior Cob showed a communion skill similar to that with his own Sylph.

Of course, I was now an intermediate level 1 so it is impossible to freely communicate with Sylph the way Cob did.

The spirits can send me images but I couldn't send images to the spirits.

I think it'll become better as the level increases.

Anyway, the images of the two examinees was planted in my mind. Their short hairstyle and looks and clothing, they're Chinese for sure.

'I'll lead them to a good spot for a fight.'

A spot good for fighting was definitely the mountain.

All this time I had done my exams in forests and mountains so that environment was geographically familiar to me.

Not only that, I could feel the power of nature from the mountain much more strongly than I could in the city.

I got a taxi on the street.

"Please take me to Wonmi Mountain."

"Shall I drop you off at the museum?"

"Yes."

"Okay."

The taxi driver answered energetically and departed.

Sylph SENT me an image of the two middle-aged men getting into a taxi. As expected, they're following me.

We drove for about 15 minutes. I got off at the city library halfway up the mountain.

Starting from there, I began to go up.

I looked behind me for a second and I could see the two middle-aged men getting out of their taxi that arrived a bit later.

‘They’re moving about so obviously.’

I can’t see a hint of stealth. It just looks like they’re out here on a hike.

Even though it is 2 to 1, this was the reason I chose to fight.

They were just sitting there chatting in broad daylight in the café across the apartment.

‘They’re corrupt examinees.’

If they were examinees clearing their exams, they wouldn’t have lost their tensions and caution.

It made me think that they were examinees that had given up on the exams a long time ago and instead started focusing on the safe work of collecting majeong.

But they have still passed a lot of exams which was why they there underestimating me, a 6th turn examinee.

This was a chance.

‘I’ll get you both and take your karma.’

A corrupt examinees minus karma would become a sweet plus karma for me.

There was no reason to lose such a great chance to gain so much karma.

Sylph, who had been watching them, sent me another image.

The short one was coming up the mountain trail behind me.

And the fat one was moving through the mountainside.

There was no need to overthink this. I could guess their attack pattern.

‘The short one will try to get my attention and then using that distraction, the decisive blow will be from that ajusshi with the belly.’

Unlike how they appeared, the one that seemed confident in defense was the short one.

Even knowing that I use guns, he follows without any fear or hesitation. It means he’s not scared of getting hit with bullets!

‘It means he has something that makes his body like steel or something of that sort.’

On the other side, the fat man seemed to be the one with the better attack skill.

These two men probably use this pattern when hunting for majeong.

‘That means the one I have to go after first is the fat one.’

Unlike the short man, if the fat one is shot with bullets, he won’t be safe.

Dusk was setting which was why perhaps no one was on the Wonmi mountain trail. There was no one I could see in the area so I figured the fight could start now.

“Sylph, Kasa.”

-Meow.

-Bark!

Sylph and Kasa showed themselves.

I summoned my Mosin-Nagant and handed it to Sylph and said.

“First, I’m going to attack that short man. Then the fat one will use that as an opportunity to try and attack me. At that time, you two shoot at him.”

The spirits nodded their heads and disappeared into the mountain.

I took out the two Neilson H2 guns and held one in each hand and dove into the mountain to find and attack the short one.

‘Here we go!’

I had been hiding behind a tree and as the short one approached closer and closer, I suddenly lunged forward while dual wielding my guns.

“.....!”

Taang—

Without hesitation, I pulled the triggers. Thanks to the shooting skill, within a 10 meters distance, my accuracy was 100%.

“Kuk!”

The short man was hit with the bullets and stumbled.

But then that’s it. As expected, even after being hit with the bullets, his body was strong enough to withstand it.

He reached out with both hands and shouted something in Chinese. As he did so, a large square shield and long sword appear.

And that wasn’t all.

Pa pat!

Gloves, helmet, armor, boots, he was heavily armed in gold colored armor from head to toe! His whole body was covered in armor and then there was still the shield.

A defense reminiscence of a steel tub. He probably had a couple more skills that increased his defense.

‘Definitely not an opponent that I can finish off quickly.’

The one that needs to be taken care of first was the fat one.

The short man smiled and then attacked me.

Boong!

The long sword was flung in all directions.

It's just a simple attack. I easily took a step back to avoid it.

He continued to come at me while flinging his sword around and I swiftly shifted left and right and dodged them all.

‘Is this all?’

It's an attack that was far crappier than I expected and it actually flustered me.

With my double guns, I aimed and shot at his forehead and shoulders.

Then, something incredible happened.

Ta tang – Ddaang, ddang!

At incredible speeds the square shield moved and caused the two bullets to ricochet away.

‘What is this, this speed?’

The shield moved so fast that it was nearly impossible to see with the naked eye.

‘A skill.’

Probably a skill attached to using the shield.

Like my shooting skill that boasts a 100% accuracy. He too has a 100% accuracy skill for his shield.

But a 100% defense skill doesn't make sense. If that's possible, that means this man is unbeatable.

There has to be some weak point hiding somewhere.

For now, I tried to continually attack with the guns. And every time I did, the square shield instantly moved to ricochet the bullets off.

But then.

Sylph sent a certain image into my mind via the communion.

It was a scene, the fat man was aiming at my back from behind me.

And at the same time.

“Cha ha!”

Paat!

From behind me, the fat man jumped out and onto me.

Sylph sent me the warning so I threw my body out of the way to the left.

When the fat man reached out both his hands, a green murky smoke covered me.

At the same time, from the fat man’s head, blood exploded out like a fountain. Sylph and Kasa had hit their mark.

‘Success!’

But at the same time I couldn’t feel a sense of accomplishment. The second I breathed in the green smoke, a breath stopping pain swept over me.

A pain like my throat was burning!

I recalled the time we did the CBR training in the army.

‘Poison?!’



## Chapter 102 – Corrupt Examinee(s) (Part 2)

---

The short man started shouting something out about this and that. He was in a rage at the death of his teammate.

Due to the pain of my throat and lungs on fire, I wasn't able to get my get my head on straight.

The fat man's specialty was surprise attacks with poison.

The second he attacked me, he had his blind spot open and suffered from the shooting but at the very least he succeeded had in poisoning me.

“Kuuk! Kuk!”

I screamed in agony. The pain was so intense I thought I would stop breathing.

‘Calm down.’

Even through the pain, I desperately tried to think things through.

He wouldn't have used something strong enough to kill me. Because capturing me should be their goal. In that case, I should be able to overcome. Heal.....!

“Kuhuk, flame of life.....!”

As I said so a flame of life was born. I immediately put that in my mouth and swallowed.

The hot energy passed through my throat and spread into my entire body. The pain then started to dissipate.

As I panted, I was barely able to get my body up.

“Kuahh!”

The short man came running at me. He was in a raging fit due to his friend's death.

Then.

Ddang!

The bullet that Sylph shot hit the short man on his helmet.

He momentarily faltered.

‘He couldn’t block that?’

Such a broken blocking skill wasn’t able to block that shot?

Then that means the defense wasn’t actually 100% perfect.

Then.....

I suddenly recalled the time I beat Leon Silver.

At first, when I shot at him with the revolvers, Leon Silver was able to dodge it.

Even though my 100% accuracy skill shouldn’t have missed.

But after that when I shot with double revolvers, I was able to hit him even though he was trying to dodge.

That was because I shot while anticipating the direction he would dodge in.

Thus, the 100% shooting accuracy was only effective when I anticipated the direction of my moving target.

Now if I apply this information to this man with the shield...

‘He can only block what he can see!’

I found the man’s weak spot.

He couldn’t block an unexpected attack.

Despite having that great shield, the reason for his heavy armor was to cover that weakness.

Taang! Tang!

I pressured the man by blindly firing shots at him. At the same time, Sylph and Kasa’s power infused shooting began too.

Dda da dang!

As that happened, this time, the square shield blocked all the shots.

‘My theory is correct.’

This time, the man was aware of the shots and could block all of them!

Then I have to emphasize the unexpected shots.

“Sylph, wind blades!”

As soon as I said it, Sylph appeared beside me and consecutively sent blades of wind flying out towards him.

The man was completely surprised and tried to put up his square shield while crouching his body.

Chwa chwa chwa chwa Chwak-!

The wind blades crashed into the shield and armor.

“Continue!”

At my shout, Sylph continued to throw blades of wind at the man.

But as she does so, the small man’s shield moved at super speed and blocked them all.

It was able to recognize and block the blades of wind too.

“Teleport!”

I quickly shifted through space.

I moved atop the man’s head. The man quickly looked up.

Ta tang—

The two shots I got out from my double guns were blocked by the man’s shield.

That moment, I used both of my legs to wrap around his left arm that was holding the shield.

‘Now, he probably can’t use his shield?’

Just like that I twisted my body and aimed the Nielsen H2 in my left hand at the middle of his forehead.

This time too, the square shield blocks it.

The moment the man's left arm was stuck, he threw down the sword and picked up the shield in his right hand.

“Uh ahhh!”

As he shouted, he flung around his shield.

Swoosh!

I laid down flat on the ground and dodged the shield. Then with a back kick, I hit the man's back leg and knocked him down.

“Wind blade!”

At my call, Sylph started throwing out blades of wind once again.

Even after falling on the ground, the man spun as if he was break dancing and blocked everything with his square shield.

“Kasa! Burn it up!”

And Kasa appeared next to me and blew fire from his mouth.

The flames went forth like waves.

The man jumped up to his feet and clenched his teeth and swung his square shield with all his might Hwa lu lu lu-! Hwa lu luk!

The flames were flung left and right off of the swirling square shield.

This shield defense skill was even able to block Kasa's flames.

‘What a ridiculous skill.’

The man picked up the sword he had dropped. Then he came towards me.

The sword wasn't really all that scary. The scary thing was the square shield he kept flinging around.

It would make a loud screech and every time the heavy shield

came towards me, it frightened me and I would take a step back.

While dodging the swinging square shield, I swung my revolver in my right hand forward. I hit with the handle of the gun but that too was quickly blocked by the square shield.

The shield moved automatically and in this situation, it was blocking every one of my attacks.

Sylph was still attacking with her blades of wind and Kasa was still spitting his flames.

And me with my reload skill to automatically replenish my bullets, I keep throwing out attacks with my double guns.

Kwa kwa Kwang!

Chwa chwa chwa chwaak—

Ta ta ta tang!

The man stood firm and blocked all these attacks with this square shield.

‘I won’t be able to hold out if I keep doing this.’

I think I’ll tire first.

My fitness level was adequate enough but I was worried about the time left I had on my spirit summons. I’ve used too much of their strength.

‘For now I need to take a step back.’

“Teleport!”

I moved 12 m away from the man. The short man shouted and chased after me. But...

“Teleport! Teleport! Teleport!”

With 3 consecutive teleports successfully made a simple escape.

“Divine Protection of the Wind!”

Adding the Divine Protection of the Wind, I made my way

through the mountains at top speed.

After running for about 10 minutes like that, I sat down to get some rest.

“Board retrieval.”

-Name: Kim Hyun-ho

-Class: 21

-Karma: +3,499

-Mission: Rest until the next exam

-Time limit: 75 days 5 hours 39 minutes

I got 3,400 karma.

The dead fat man's karma must have been – 3,400.

“Show me the spirit summons skill.”

For now I decided to check how much time I had left on the spirit summons.

-Spirit summons (main skill): summon intermediate levels spirits and gain the power of nature, absorb the power of surrounding nature to improve self.

\*Spirits able to be summoned: Sylph, Kasa

\*Intermediate level 1: summons time 5 hours (remaining time 2 hours 13 minutes), when the summon time is up, summoning is possible again in 10 hours' time.

I have used up just over half the time. If I keep fighting the same way as before, it will just be a disadvantage to me. I have to make a solid play for his weak spot.

“Sylph, where is the man?”



Sylph draws the number 213.

Just 213 meters?

I was sure that he hasn't given up and was still chasing me.

If he has already shortened the distance by this much, it means he must be chasing me while knowing my exact location. He might have the guider skill.

How should I use the 3,400 karma? What skill should I invest in in order to beat this guy?

I was deep in thought when...

Ring, ring.

My smartphone suddenly buzzed.

"Fuck that scared me!"

Who is this, in this situation!

First, to avoid the man that was closing in on me, I ran away as I answered up the phone.

The Divine Protection of the Wind hadn't run out yet and I was able to put a lot of distance in between us pretty quickly.

"Hello?"

-Where are you right now?

A female voice with a strict and ordered soldier-like tone.

"Miss Cha Ji-hye?"

-Yes. Where are you now?

"I am in Bucheon."

-I know you live in Bucheon. Where are you now?

"On Wonmi Mountain. I'm busy right now, could I return your call later?"

-It is an urgent matter. Have you by any chance been attacked

before?

“I am being attacked right now.”

Yep, it was definitely Cha Ji-hye who sent me the warning text message before.

-Excuse me?

Asked Cha Ji-hye in a surprised voice.

“I mean, I am in the middle of being chased right now. Remember I said I’m busy at the moment?”

-Did you say Wonmi Mountain? What is your situation right now?

“I killed one and the remaining one is pissed and chasing after me. His attacks nor his speed are that threatening but his defense is unbelievable and I can’t figure out a way to beat him.”

-And you have taken care of one of them?

“Yes, thanks to him I’ve got some karma but I don’t know where to invest it in order to beat this guy.”

-Please wait a second.

I could hear Cha Ji-hye conversing with someone. Hearing “to Bucheon Wonmi Mountain” meant she’s probably in a taxi.

-Please tell me more specifics about him.

“His shield moves so fast that the naked eye can’t even see it move and it blocks all attacks. I think that any attack that the user is aware of will be blocked 100% of the time. It might permit an unexpected attack.”

-It is an assist skill called ‘block.’

“Block?”

-It is a skill using a shield. When that skill is completely mastered, it displays such effects. It even blocks magic.

“Mastered? Damn it.”

Mastered a skill. I thought that level of blocking was ridiculous.

“Is there no weakness?”

-As you mentioned, you can kill him by attacking in an unexpected pattern of attacks.

“His body was so strong even getting hit with a bullet didn’t do anything.”

-He has mastered the physical strength buff or..... did you say his attacks and speed weren’t special?

“Yes.”

-Then that means he hasn’t trained his aura control so it can’t be the physical strength buff. It is probably the main skill called ‘body malleability/ductility’.\*

“Body [malleability/ductility](#)? Well, does it make the body hard?

-Yes, but first, you have to break through the block. The block’s second weak point is the shield’s durability.

“Are you saying to break the shield?”

-Yes, the block skill can’t be used if you break the shield by using strong physical attacks.

“Ugh.”

That square shield, even at a glance it was iron.....

Regardless, all I could do was try.

“Okay. But, are you on your way over here?”

-Yes, I am.

“Is there help coming from another examinee?”

-Yes. Please survive until I get there.

“Will do.”

After I ended the call, I continued to run and I retrieved my board.

“Show me all my skills.”

-Showing all skills attained by examinee Kim Hyun-ho.

-Main skill: spirit summons (intermediate level 1) -Assist skill: Physical Strength Buff (intermediate level 5), Guider (entry level 1), Teleport (intermediate level 1) -Special skill: Skill synthesis

-Synthesis skill: Divine Protection of The Wind (intermediate level 1), Divine Protection of Fire (entry level 1), reflex (superior level 1), flame of life (intermediate level 4), transmission (entry level 1), space bag (entry level 4), shooting (entry level 1), ammo compensation (entry level 1), reload.

-Remaining karma: +3,499

Skimming over my skills I landed on one thing.

“Show me ammo compensation!”

-ammo compensation (synthesis skill): strengthens bullets across use of all firearms.

\*entry level 1

“If I use all my karma?”

Then the words on the board changed again.

-Showing the results of using all remaining karma on ammo compensation (skill synthesis).

-Ammo compensation (synthesis skill): strengthens bullets across use of all firearms.

\*Intermediate level 1: bullets have the power to go through boulders.

-Remaining karma: +399

It goes through a boulder? I guess that's not enough to pierce through iron.

'No, what if I use this with spirit summons?'

If I just shoot it, the bullet could go through a boulder.

On top of that, if Sylph and Kasa both used their strength, the bullet will be that much stronger.

With that, it really might be enough to penetrate that square shield made of iron.

"I will raise my ammo compensation to intermediate level 4!"

Pat!

The board lit up.

-Using 3,100 karma to raise the ammo compensation to intermediate level 4.

-Ammo compensation (synthesis skill): strengthens bullets across use of all firearms.

\*intermediate level 4: bullets have the power to go through boulders -remaining karma: +399

'Yes!'

I picked up my two Nielsen H2 revolvers and turned around.

If it was strong enough to penetrate that square shield, it will definitely be enough to get through the man's body.

'You're dead.'

(Malleability is said to be the property of a material to deform under compression. Ductility is said to be the property of a material to stretch without getting damaged. Basically it's a metal body that can stretch.)



# Chapter 103 – An Unexpected Reunion (Part 1)

---

‘You’re dead.’

I summoned Sylph and Kasa.

“Let’s go!”

I made up my mind and in order to butt up against my strongest opponent, I valiantly marched forward. But....

-Meow!

-Bark bark!

When the cute kitty and puppy ran after me, it shattered the heroic mood.

But I was trying so hard to look cool and tough just now.....

Ring.

The smartphone I put in my pocket was buzzing again.

‘Now what?’

When I checked it, I saw it was a text from Cha Ji-hye.

[I will arrive in approximately 10 minutes. I request taxi fare please. You can send Sylph.]

‘What, what’s with this woman?!’

I was just flabbergasted.

What was she doing that she didn’t even bring her own taxi fare? Not only that but doesn’t she have her own car?

I don’t know what she was doing when she got into the taxi but anyway, I asked Sylph.

“Sylph, you remember Cha Ji-hye?”

-Meow.

Sylph nodded her head.

“When my cellphone buzzes it means that she is in a taxi nearby. I need you to send her my card.”

-Meow.

Good, it was a bit of weird order but she understood.

I shook past the weird feeling and grabbed my double guns.

Now the real fight could begin!

Some of the anxiety had gone down a little but anyhow, I made my way towards the small Chinaman.

I could sense what direction he was in with my guider skill.

The small Chinaman discovered me and starting yelling as he ran towards me.

I pulled the triggers on both my guns at the same time. My target was the center of the square shield.

Tang-tang!

The man blocked his body with his square shield. Sparks clearly sparked from the center of his shield.

‘Good.’

The man didn’t realize that what I was aiming for was the shield. I got the feeling also that he hadn’t realized that the strength and power of my bullets had gotten stronger.

His safe fighting pattern of relying on the same skill was now a habit.

The advantage was mine for sure.

Ta ta ta tang—

I kept shooting my guns and hitting the center of the shield.

The man stood his impenetrable square shield up in front of his body as he approached me and repeatedly swung his long sword.

It seems he is slowly adjusting his position to try to corner me but it has no effect.

I am well versed in aversion from all the dodging done with the elves during the games of tag.

I kicked off from the tree behind me and jumped in the air and shot my double guns.

Continuing on, I turned around in the air and shot again.

I hug upside down from a tree limb with my left foot while continuing to shoot at his shield.

Ta ta ta tang—

A tiny show of fireworks showered out from the shield.

With the power of the stronger bullet skill and the spirits, the bullets unrelentingly shot at the center.

When I landed, the man swung his sword at me, forcing me to roll on the ground to avoid it.

As I rolled, I tried to shoot at his face but with great speed the square shield was able to block it.

With his sword held point down, he tried to stab me into the ground ‘An opening!’

That second, I quickly moved both of my legs.

With one foot, I kicked the sword over and with the other foot I wrapped up his right arm. I let go of the gun in my left hand and grabbed his wrist.

This was the first time I really tried an arm bar but it worked out surprisingly well. The effects of the reflex superior level 1 skill was amazing.

The man was taken by surprise.

In that position, I pulled on the man and with I shoot the gun that was still in my right hand Tang – tang!

The shield effortlessly blocked the bullets.

I put more strength into the arm bar and with my right hand, kept on pulling the trigger of my Neilson H2.

Tang! Tang! Tang! Tang!

The bullets crazily shot at the square shield.

Thanks to the reload skill, when the clip was empty, the bullets were automatically replenished.

The man's arm wouldn't twist at all.

Was this the body malleability/ ductility?

She said it's probably a skill like that and indeed, his body was stiff like steel.

But I was in an advantageous position.

The man was awkwardly locked in the arm bar whilst standing, trying to withstand the pressure.

I kept draining his energy while shooting relentlessly with my gun.

Then, I realized the man's Arena experience indeed wasn't for naught.

"Kuahh!"

The man angrily yelled out.

Boong!

Just like that he threw his body into me.

He was planning on crushing me!

His body was small in stature but because of his heavy armor, if I got squished under him, it would put me at a huge disadvantage.

I let go of the arm bar and rolled away.

As I did so, I picked up the gun I had thrown on the ground earlier.

Koong!

I was just able to escape by a hair's breadth when the man smothered the spot I was in with all his weight.

With my double guns I aimed at the helmet he's wearing, pulling the trigger at his head.

Tang!

Like always, the square shield eliminated the threat instantly.

I raised my upper body and shot while standing up entirely and shooting again, and I kept shooting as I took a few steps back and placed some distance between us.

I became one with my guns and, without losing any momentum, continued shooting.

The reload skill was a huge help.

Because it automatically reloads there was no pause in my shooting and my attacks were smooth and endless.

The man again raised himself back up and slowly shortened the distance between us.

'Does he think time is on his side?'

Then again, that wouldn't be a wrong guess.

As time goes on, the amount of bullets in my space bag will completely run out or the time limit on my spirit summons will run out.

But I have a play I'm making and because of that, I don't rush and continued to attack.

'Your shield will eventually crumble!'

Of course, thinking in realistic terms, it isn't impossible that the man doesn't have a spare shield to use.

But in the instance that his shield was broken, there would be a weak spot in the time it would take him to switch his shields.

‘You have already tasted one of my bullets.’

When I first shot and it had hit him, the man had suffered no injuries at all.

Because of that he’ll have let his guard down.

His whole head was filled with the confidence that even getting a hit a couple times wouldn’t kill him. On top of that, he has his armor and helmet too.

But that’s exactly why he’ll leave an opening for me.

Just one chance!

‘I will kill you and take your karma.’

So that all Chinese examinees will have to think twice before trying to take advantage of me.

Then, the credit card that I had taken out my wallet and put in my pocket was taken away by the wind.

Sylph had sent it flying.

‘Cha Ji-hye must be here.’

Her request for taxi fare made me think she had come alone.

Just what help does she think she could be to me that she came alone? This is an examinees battle.

That question was just a fleeting thought before I refocused and continued the fight.

Now, I could see a sign.

The sound of the bullet bouncing off the shield was the tiniest bit different now than it was just a moment ago.

I think this was the time and I kept firing my double guns.

Center, at the center!

Kwa ji jik!

It’s hit in the dead center and the square shield crumbled into a



thousand pieces.

“.....?!”

The man suddenly had a surprised expression on his face.

I immediately aimed for the man's face and shot.

The second he saw the trigger pulled, the man ducked his head down.

Ddang! Ddang!

The helmet went flying off from the force of the bullet.

‘Nice, now one more!’

Using both arms the man frantically attempted to cover his face.

Ta tang—

Blood immediately started flowing from both his arms as he was hit with bullets.

“Kuaack!”

The man started screaming from the pain of the bullets lodged into the flesh of his arms.

Unlike earlier, the bullets were now penetrating his body.

Indeed, the man's body was still strong. Had he been a normal person, those bullets would have sent his arms flying off.

Ta tang-

“Kuk!”

The bullet struck an arm again. The man would not let his guard down.

The man shouted something and another square shield appeared.

‘Damn!’

In the end, he summoned another shield.

The man blocked the bullets with his new square shield, put

down the sword in his other hand, and summoned his item bag.

Ta ta tang—

Without even seeing the shots, he used the block skill for cover as he took out a healing potion from his item bag. He took off the top and poured it over both his arms.

His flesh closed and the bullets fell out onto the ground.

Having healed his wounds, the man looked at me with a rage far superior than before.

‘This failed too, do I have no choice but to retreat?’

I couldn’t think of another way.

The man had thought through all my possible attacks.

If I wasn’t able to attack with something new and different.....

And then.

From the trees to the left, a human shadow jumped out.

Taking off like a bird, the figure leapt towards the man and, from both sides of the hips, withdrew two strangely curved swords.

At the same time as they were removed from their sheathes, the double curved-swords moved at lightning speed. And from the double curved-swords, a subtle blue light was shining.

An ambush out of the blue.

The man did not see the figure.

Chwaaak!

“Kuaack!”

The man’s wretched scream rang out.

The left arm that had been holding the square shield was cut off completely and fell to the ground.

At the same time, the figure deftly rolled once and got up.

Upon seeing the identity of the figure, I can't help but be completely surprised.

“What are you doing?”

It was Cha Ji-hye.

At her words, I reflexively drew up my double guns and shot haphazardly.

Pu pu pu puk!

“Kuaack!”

Having lost his left arm with his shield, the man was left without any defenses and was hit with all the bullets.

The man tried to pick up the fallen shield with his right hand but I was quicker.

Ta tang—

In his helmetless head, two pierced red holes appeared.

Koong!

From his stance of trying to pick up his shield, he fell right over.

With his eyes wide open, he breathed his last breath.

Su lu lung—

Cha Ji-hye returned her double curved-swords to their sheathes and looked at me.

“It has been a long time.”

“Yes? Oh, yes.....”

Cha Ji-hye?

Did that attack from just a bit ago come from Cha Ji-hye?

How did she carry out such a stealthy attack? The power to cut off an entire arm of a man with body malleability!

Just now, the blue light that was seen from her double curved-

swords, that was definitely an aura.

“You weren’t an examinee..... when did you die?”

“I died the night I sent you that text.”

“What? Then, was it because of me.....”

“First, let’s take care of the bodies and leave the area.”

“Oh, yes.”

We dragged the fat man’s body as well and buried it.

Sylph helped to dig out a hole but at times like this, I thought it would be easier if I had an earth spirit.

While I buried the men, I couldn’t help but have some questions.

Since I had received the text, it had already been about ten days.

If she had become an examinee at that time, the now she would have just finished her second exam.

But from what I saw earlier, Cha Ji-hye’s great abilities weren’t that of a 2nd turn examinee.

“The blue light I saw on your swords...that was aura, right?”

“You are correct. Aura control at the intermediate level allows one to exert aura outside of their bodies and in the Arena, those people are called Aura Experts.”

‘Intermediate?!’

I was shocked.

“How did you raise your main skill to intermediate already? I have only barely just gotten my spirit summons to intermediate level 1!”

“I am at intermediate level 1 as well.”

“Just which turn are you at?”

Cha Ji-hye answered my question directly.

“I am a 6th turn examinee.”

“No way!”

“It has been 15 years since I have seen you.”

“.....?!”

At my surprised face, Cha Ji-hye said..

“Let’s go.”

“Huh? Oh, sure.”

With a flabbergasted expression, I moved alongside Cha Ji-hye.

“I am a dead person in this world. For the time being I need a place to stay quietly. Would it be possible to request this from you?”

“..... huh?”

I thought I misheard her.

Cha Ji-hye said.

“I have no money to my name. When they threw my body into the ocean, the Chinese took my wallet, car, everything. I have had a bit of a difficult time because of that.”

“Oh, then, let me get you a hotel booked.....”

“I think it would be best to stay together.”

“I have a woman I live with.....”

“You intend to continue living with your girlfriend while you are clearly a target?”

“.....”

## Chapter 104 – An Unexpected Reunion (Part 2)

---

“If you wish to protect her from danger, I think it would be best that you stop living with your girlfriend and keep her at a distance.”

Because Aha Ji-hye’s numerous reasons all made a lot of sense, I was unable to offer any sort of response.

If I mess up, I could plunge Min-jeong into danger.

Wanting to keep Min-jeong close to me like I am now would be extremely selfish on my part.

But.....

‘Suggesting we stop living together now is the same as breaking up!’

Without any reason, just kicking Min-jeong out of the house will no doubt be a big trauma to her.

“There is the option of telling your significant other about the Arena and the exams and explaining everything to her.”

“That isn’t an option.”

“Anyhow, you must make a decision.”

After that, Cha Ji-hye didn’t say anything more about the topic.

We grabbed a taxi together and on our way home, I was at odds with myself over what to do.

Definitely, to keep Min-jeong out of the dangerous cross hairs, I have to move her out of the house.

‘There is no other way.’

I have to, no matter what, get Min-jeong out and try my best to console her.

“Is there no way to stop this threat to myself?”

“That does not exist.”

Said Cha Ji-hye.

“First of all, it would be good to let your existence be known far and wide.”

“And why is that?”

“Various national agencies are already suspicious about Chairman Park Jin-seong’s miraculous recovery. We can safely assume that they are all already searching for an examinee with the skill to cure diseases.”

“Yes, probably.”

“If multiple countries are involved, the Chinese examinees can’t just behave however they want when they’re in Korea. An ‘expelled’ examinee makes for good hunting.”

“I guess that’s true. But won’t there be those from other nations who like the Chinese will attempt to kidnap me?”

“There will be those that try to kidnap you and those that want to recruit you. If you gain so much interest from the latter, doing those things becomes harder. Plus, you already have a formidable ally.”

“You mean Odin?”

“Yes. Odin from the Nordic examinee group is an abnormally strong player that no one is willing to cross without an extremely good reason. With his support on your side, everyone will think twice about going after you directly.”

“Hmm.....”

Become the center of attention of the whole world?

Just thinking about all this was giving me a headache. The scale of this problem was much bigger than the problem of kicking Min-

jeong out of the house.

After thinking over the situation a bit more, I said to Cha Ji-hye.

“Can our country not protect me? If they know I have healing powers, won’t they try to protect me?”

“Korea is currently in the midst of (two country) policy building. Especially in regards to matters connected to the Arena, they are convinced that China will be a majeong rich country in the future and are thus maintaining friendly relations with the Chinese.”

“Is that why they sold my information to the Chinese?”

“Although that was a dangerous act done solely by Chief Kim Joong-tae, as long as our policy with them stands the way it does the pro-Chinese chief won’t be replaced from his position.”

“Damn it.....”

Not only is being protected by my own country completely out of the picture but to be sold out by it. What kind of fucked up situation is this.

“If I killed Chief Kim Joong-tae, wouldn’t our connection to China grow weaker?”

“There is a program that exists for when an examinee becomes a serious criminal. More so than Kim Joong-tae’s corruption, the murder of a person in his position would probably stir up more trouble.”

“.....”

“So it could be a better choice to publicize your skill to the world. There are more than a few people amongst those that have the power to move nations that could use your help, and you can turn them into your allies.”

Cha Ji-hye continued to speak.

“If you do that, you will actually become a strong power that no one can touch.”



I nodded my head.

“Okay. I guess I have no choice but to do that.”

Letting myself be known and gathering allies like Chairman Park Jin-seong sounds like it may be the only viable way for me to survive.

“Anyway, Cha Ji-hye, who killed you?”

“Have you heard the name Lee Chang-wee?”

“Nope.”

“He is the strongest of the Chinese examinees. There is no one in China that is more capable or holds more authority.”

“What powers does he have?”

“The only things I could verify were teleport and that he uses a sword. According to the rumors, he was an impressive martial artist before he became an examinee.”

“An impressive martial artist?”

“Do you remember Kang Chun-seong?”

“Of course.”

“If Kang Chun-seong, who was extremely strong as a 2nd turn examinee, had continued to grow into a veteran, what would he have become? You can say that that is Lee Chang-wee.”

“.....”

If he was originally a strong martial artist like Kang Chun-seong, his starting point alone was different than others.

If he has even acquired authority then he will be able to gain even more benefits from his country, even in the whole world that makes him a top class examinee.

“If Lee Chang-wee himself had gone after you today, you would not have been safe. Thankfully, it seems he did not see the need to take care of this himself.”

“That’s really grim. Before he sets out to take care of you himself, we need to quickly take action.”

“You must.”

Before going home, we headed to the real estate agent’s office.

I asked if there was a one room/studio immediately available today and there was.

Close to Hyun-ji’s studio there was one place available so I contracted a lease. Seeing the listing photo, the space looked pretty clean and neat. Of course, it was priced to reflect that.

The owner picked up and raced over and signed the lease agreement.

‘Since I felt really bad to just kick her out.’

Thinking of how much this was going to hurt her, I had to at least provide her a place to go. And since it’s close to Hyun-ji, that’s good too.

Having to ask Min-jeong to move out, I couldn’t help but to keep sighing.

After coming out of the realtor’s office, I said to Cha Ji-hye who was waiting in the car.

“For today, spend the night at a nearby motel. I’m going to send Min-jeong away tomorrow.”

“I understand.”

I gave Cha Ji-hye a decent sum of money.

When I finally returned home, it was late at night.

“Oppa, you home?”

Min-jeong came out to me and greeted me happily.

“Yeah.”

I replied with a forlorn look on my face.

“What? Did something happen?”

Min-jeong saw my expression and asked.

I nodded my head.

“What is it?”

“I’m sorry. I can’t say.”

“..... does it have to do with your work?”

“Yeah.”

“Okay. I won’t ask.”

Answering politely, Min-jeong was in good spirits.

“Min-jeong.”

“Yes, oppa.”

She must have sensed the tense atmosphere, because Min-jeong’s behavior quickly changed to one of caution.

“Will you really not misunderstand and listen to what I have to say?”

“Why, why are you being like this?”

“We should live separately for the time being.”

“What?”

Min-jeong looked so confused.

I quickly continued to speak.

“This isn’t a problem about us, but a problem with my work. A rather serious problem has come up.....”

“You, um, want me to leave this house?”

“Even if we don’t live together, our relationship won’t change at all. So please. I’m begging you.”

“Oppa, did I do something wrong? Is it because of that thing before?”

“I said it’s not about us. It’s something I can’t tell you about. There is no problem between us.”

“But, um, it’s so sudden. Just why are you trying to kick me out?”

“I can’t tell you.”

“You want me to suddenly leave, and, well, where am I supposed to go.....”

There were tears starting to well in Min-jeong’s eyes.

“I got a studio close to Hyun-ji’s place. There really is no problem between us. Please don’t ask questions and spend the time being there. Please.”

“And you’re not using excuses because you’re sick of me?”

“I’m not that despicable of a guy.”

At my sudden request, that really seemed more like an order to move out, I had to console Min-jeong for a long while.

She asked several times just what my job is. Of course, I couldn’t tell her.

“It won’t take months. I promise you that. Please trust me and wait.”

“..... okay. Even if we don’t live together, we have to see each other all the time.”

“Okay.”

But honestly, seeing her all the time is difficult. The more I met with Min-jeong, the more likely it was that she would become a target.

Instead, my plan was to increase my entourage of powerful allies as fast as possible so that no one could touch me.

The next morning, I took Min-jeong to the newly leased studio.

I had just looked at the photo and leased it but thankfully it

looked like it did in the photo and was a nice place.

“If there’s anything you need, always let me know.”

“Okay, oppa.”

Even as she replied, Min-jeong couldn’t shake the depression off of herself. I felt so bad.

After moving her out of the house, I went and got Cha Ji-hye who was at the motel. If Min-jeong saw this, there would be a huge misunderstanding.

“You can stay in the guest room there.”

“Thank you.”

“Don’t mention it. I’m the one that is thankful.”

She’s a woman that died because she tried to help me.

She became an examinee because of me, I had a duty to do the best I could to help her.

‘Oh wait, I haven’t checked how much karma I got.’

I hadn’t yet checked how much karma I got from killing the small man.

“Board retrieval.”

-Name: Kim Hyun-ho

-Class: 21

-Karma: +4,152

-Mission: rest until the next exam.

-Time limit: 74 days 2 hours 21 minutes

I’ve gone up roughly 4,000 karma.

I wonder how I’m going to spend this prize when I suddenly asked Cha Ji-hye.

“You said you’re a 6th turn examinee?”

“Yes, I did.”

“Just how were you able to become a 6th turn examinee like me?”

“I didn’t use any rest time. I had to become stronger in a very short period of time.”

“That’s possible?”

“Thankfully, I was granted my request.”

Cha Ji-hye spent 15 years in the Arena.

Even though she spent so much time doing exams, she barely took a break! What an intense mentality she has.

Her mood had definitely changed as well. I got a sharp feeling from her, like a well sharpened blade.

That’s for sure.

She was no longer the Cha Ji-hye I knew. She was an examinee that spent 15 years fighting.

“May I ask what your skills are?”

“What do you think about sharing and discussing ours with each other?”

“Yes, that sounds like a good idea. Since we are in the same boat now.”

I knew I could trust Cha Ji-hye for sure so I told her about all my skills.

She told me her skills as well and they’re all pretty strong.

Aura control intermediate level 1.

Physical strength buffer intermediate level 1.

Similar to Odin, she concentrated on growing these two skills.

“I spent a lot of my exam time training under a warrior who lived

on the outskirts of the world.”

Cha Ji-hye recounted her story, which continued on.

She started in the southwest of the continent tropical swamps, and in the 2nd exam, she met an old warrior who lived on its outskirts and became acknowledged as his disciple.

“A woman like you wouldn’t be able to handle my training. My style of fighting requires a body to that has already been trained to the limits of what the human body can handle before starting.”

At the time, Cha Ji-hye’s body was at physical strength buff entry level 4.

Over the next three years, with blood drenching hard work and training, she trained her body its limits.

So really, she achieved her physical strength buff entry level 5 through sheer training.

She became his disciple and her 3rd exam’s time was used to master the aura control.

Her main skill, aura control, wasn’t bought with a karma prize but through five years of training.

Like that, for 15 years, she received training from her master and saved her karma time and time again and reached the stage she was at now.

“In order to catch up to you, who has set a record with every exam, I endured severe training.”

“You are really something”

“..... I thought I had caught up to you so I came to help but in the time I haven’t seen you, you have grown unrecognizably stronger.”

# Chapter 105 – Spreading the Word (Part 1)

---

My performance up to the 6th exam was the following.

First, the main skill spirit summons was intermediate level 1.

Not only HAD I raised Sylph and Kasa into intermediate spirits but I was able to take the power of nature into my own body.

What strengthens my body, the physical strength buff, was intermediate level 5, and for an examinee that hasn't learned aura control, that was the highest IT could be raised to. This level is considered to be pretty strong as well, being the limit of an elf's physique.

The teleport skill is intermediate level 1 and there was no cool time and could be used consecutively up to 10 times a day.

Regarding the special skill known as the skill synthesis, I had made many skills but there were four in particular that were of special significance.

Divine Protection of the Wind; intermediate level 1.

Reflex; superior level 1.

Flame of life; intermediate level 4.

And the skill I was able to raise from the fight earlier, the ammo compensation; intermediate level 4.

Other than that, the entry level 4 space bag was also a very useful skill.

“Are these really the skills of a 6th turn examinee?”

Having sifted through the list of all my skills, Cha Ji-hye was shocked.

“Yes, I was very lucky, and I did try pretty hard.”

“Even if you did try very hard, these skills in a 6th turn examinee..... this level is about that of a veteran past the 20th turn



exam.”

It’s because I consecutively got the highest scores and it was also due to the fact that I invested \$100,000,000 USD to get 5,000 karma.

On top of that, with the many years I spent with the elves I was able to improve my spirit summons and reflexes.

All those things combined gave me my current capabilities.

“And your skill, the skill synthesis, is very impressive. When you told me about it before, you said divine protection of spirits, did you lie?”

“Yes, I’m sorry about that. Telling you the truth and divulging too much about myself seemed a bit dangerous, so.”

“That was a smart move.”

Cha Ji-hye didn’t seem hurt by that at all and gladly agreed saying I made the right call.

As she looked down the list of skills I wrote on the piece of paper for her, she suddenly asked.

“Is the skill that healed Chairman Cark Jin-seong the flame of life?”

“Yes it is.”

I told her about how I spent the 4th, 5th, and 6th exam with the elves.

Consequently, both in the Arena and in real life, the flame of life played a major role.

“You were on the Brown Mountain. Do you by any chance have the file I gave you before?”

“Of course.”

“Then let’s look at the map and discuss.”

Amongst the files that Cha Ji-hye had given me on my way out of

the research agency, I loaded the Arena map.

We were both in the southernmost area of the continent but I was on the Brown Mountain in the east of it and she was in the tropical swamps in its west.

“When I became an examinee, my goal was to become a teammate with you in Arena.”

“A team with me?”

“I thought it would be a big help to both of us if we became a team since you also don’t have any teammates.”

“If you were to become my comrade, that of course would be of help to me. But is that possible? The members that are your teammates are assigned to you in the 2nd exam. It’s possible to add members later down the line?”

“There is no absolute rule about it. Ordinarily, one is assigned teams in the 2nd turn but in my case, I have become a 6th turn examinee without any comrades and finished the exams all by myself.”

Then again, the gunsmith Neilson was alone from the start as well.

“An exam is given to the examinee with a task based on the level of the place he or she is placed in. An examinee isn’t placed in a location where the conditions are impossible to complete.”

“I was under the same impression.”

“If you and I are in real life and in the Arena in the same place, what would happen? Then don’t you think it is likely that we would get the same exam?”

“I guess that could happen.”

What Cha Ji-hye was saying made sense.

Since Cha Ji-hye and I were in the same boat now, the gods may look on that and just lump our missions together.

Because the important thing was the ultimate goal of the exams.

If something aids in the completion of that ultimate exam, won't the gods allow this convenience to that end?

'Up till now I have done plenty well alone. Because I had the elves. But I don't know what is ahead so I do need a comrade.'

As she was originally from the Korean Arena Research Agency, she has a comprehensive knowledge of the Arena, she is smart, and Cha Ji-hye would be a good comrade to have.

Thanks to Cha Ji-hye, I was able to take down the short Chinese man.

The swordsmanship she showed then was really impressive.

"Okay."

I nodded my head.

"No matter what happens, let's try to meet up in the Arena. If I became a teammate with you that would be good for me too."

We started talking about the upcoming 7th exam.

For me, in the next exam, there was a high probability that I'll leave the Brown Mountain.

The elves were gathered and thriving around their three Trees of Life.

They even thwarted the attack from the dark magician.

Now going forward, there was not much of a role left for me to do together with the elves.

Of course, I would like it if the next exam was with the elves.

Because then I can easily clear the missions going forward with a strong elf warrior like Derrick.

But I don't think such I'll get such an easy mission like that.

"I am in a similar situation. I have learned to fight from my

master for the past 15 years. There is nothing left for me to learn and he told me to leave now, so in the next exam I am planning to leave the tropical swamp.”

“It is a problem that we don’t know where we will be heading.”

“I think meeting up in the Arena will have to happen after we do the 7th exam’s mission.”

“Then for now let’s have clearing our own 7th exams be our goal.”

“I think that would be for the best.”

Now the only problem left was the threat of the Chinese examinees.

Honestly, this worried me more than the exams.

“I think the first action we need to take is alerting your existence to the world and quickly as possible. I think it would be best to proceed with that through the Nordic examinee group’s Odin.”

“Odin?”

“Yes, in the Arena community, Odin is a very powerful examinee with a reputation. If he publicly announces that he is your ally, even the Chinese will have to think twice before coming for you.”

As she suggested, I made a call to Odin.

-Mr. Kim Hyun-ho, how have you been?

“Some major events have been happening.”

-What’s going on?

“I was attacked by Chinese examinees.”

-What? Already?

Odin was completely surprised.

I gave him the specifics of what happened.

-They ultimately did go for you. Anyway, I am glad you are okay.

Getting karma before that happened was of help it seems.

“Yes it was. If it wasn’t for you, I would have been in big trouble.”

-Don’t mention it. But since you did eliminate two rogue examinees, did you get their karma?

“Yes, I have to invest in my skills and get stronger as quickly as I can.”

-It was lucky that you got two rogue examinees. The fact that you will be stronger because of that will have crossed the Chinese’s minds so they’ll think twice about doing it again.

“That is what worries me even more. They have so much interest in me that an examinee called Lee Chang-wee personally came to Korea, do you know him?”

-Lee chang-wee? He’s in Korea?

“I don’t know if he has returned to China now. But not long ago, he was definitely in Korea.

-Hmm, that man is very dangerous.

“Have you met him before?”

-I did cross paths with him once in the Arena. We didn’t fight each other but he looked very strong. I am sure he is an aura expert and, to be honest, I wasn’t confident that if we fought that I would have won.

Odin admitted his inferiority without hesitation.

Lee chang-wee really must be an incredibly strong guy.

-But Lee Chang-wee is drunk with power. He likes to have his minions do all the work. For most things, he won’t involve himself personally.

“But he did send his minions and it failed. Don’t you think he’ll come out himself now? If he sends more rogue examinees and I

beat them, then I'll become stronger because of that and it'll turn into a bigger problem for him."

-There is that. He might want to verify and check all this out himself. Then what are you planning to do?

"I was pondering the same thing."

-What do you say about coming over here?

"To Denmark?"

-Denmark or whoever, come to the Nordic exam group. China has the most examinees but they take us lightly.

"....."

-China tends to take Korea very lightly. In reality, Korea admittedly makes a big effort on its own to comply with China so while you stay in Korea, you will continue to feel threatened.

He was right and it made me quite depressed.

It was the man that is the chief of the Korean Research Agency that sold my information to the Chinese.

"Thank you for the suggestion. That is one solution but I honestly do worry about the safety of my family and so I don't feel right leaving."

-Tsk, there is that. Well, is there anything else you can think of?

"Well, about that, I called with a request in mind."

-Go ahead.

"Now that things are the way they are, I would like to let myself be known everywhere."

-Your plan is to use your powers as bait to make strong allies.

"Yes."

-The more interest you gather, the more work it all becomes. A talented examinee like you, China isn't the only greedy nation that

wants to kidnap you.

“I am aware and prepared for that. But I am sure that the allies will be worth it.”

-If you are sure, okay. I will use my connections and spread the word about you. There was already lots of interest in who it was that healed Chairman Park Jin-seong.

“Thank you.”

Like that, I finished the call with Odin.

I have tossed the dice.

\*\*\*

I was deep in thought about how to invest my 4,152 karma into my skills.

‘Should I raise my spirit summons, or my ammo compensation?’

If I raise the spirit summons, it would be like the following.

Spirit summons intermediate level 2 (-1,700)

Spirit summons intermediate level 3 (-1,900)

Spirit summons intermediate level 4 (-2,100)

So, with 3,600 karma, I can only increase it by two levels to intermediate level 3. I am sure that that will increase the power of the spirit summons a lot but still.

On the other hand if I invest it into ammo compensation, it would look like this.

-Now showing the result of investing all karma into the ammo revision (synthesis skill) skill.

-Ammo compensation (synthesis skill): when using any gun, the power of the bullets is strengthened \*Intermediate level 5: bullet has power to pierce a boulder (-800) \*Master: bullets have power to pierce through steel (-1,500) -Remaining karma: 4,152

After intermediate level 5 wasn't superior but instead it went straight to the master level.

If I use 2,300 karma, it passes the boulder and gets the power to pierce steel.

On top of that, with the power of the spirit summons wouldn't the gun be able to pierce an armored car?

After much deliberation, I decided to first master the ammo compensation and then use the remaining karma to raise the spirit summons by 1 level.

Then all I would have left was just be a mere 152 karma.

"I have 150 karma left, is there an item you need?"

I asked Cha Ji-hye.

Honestly, in eliminating the Chinese man who had skin like steel, Cha Ji-hye was a huge help.

Thanks to her I was able to get 4,000 karma, it was only right that I tried to give her something.

"I need clothes."

"Clothes?"

"Yes, I have spent the past 15 years in these clothes I'm wearing now, and a person needs clothes that blend into the environment to move about Arena without suspicion, I need clothes like that."

"One set of clothes for 15 years?"

"When you go through the exam door, damaged materials/clothes return to their original form. Up till now I haven't needed anything different so I did not spend any karma on it."

But still, a girl living 15 years in the same clothes.....

I had to applaud her for her thoroughness.



Anyway, with the remaining karma, I got her tops and bottoms, shoes, gloves, hat, a full set. On top of that I bought her a water bottle too and my karma went down to 0.

# Chapter 105 – Spreading the Word (Part 2)

---

“It can be healed?”

A middle-aged white man with a long and scraggly dark brown beard and shaved head asked with eyes wide open.

Chairman Smith Maglun’s voice was trembling.

He was the head of one of America’s top political families and, several years ago, was a senator with good backing for a presidential candidacy.

And unofficially, he was the owner of the largest majeong research centers in the world.

The Maglun family had, since long ago, been researching the ways that the majeong could be used from what was brought back by the examinees from the Arena.

Like the oil tycoon Rockefeller, the Maglun family believed that majeong was going to be the thing that would give them power in the future world’s economy.

In reality, the Maglun research center had many advances in skill/tech development and had a lot of things that were used everyday life.

If the secret of majeong from the Arena was divulged to the public, everything that the Maglun had developed off the record would all be patented and they would be able to grow rich.

Because of this, the Maglun family held a lot of influence when it came to matters that were related to the Arena.

“It was news leaked from Odin so I am sure of it.”

At the young man’s words, Smith Maglun jumped out of his chair.

“Where?”

“I heard he is a Korean examinee.”

“Contact the Korean Arena Research Agency.”

“He is not affiliated with the Korean Arena Research Agency.”

Smith Maglun smirked.

“But of course. There’s no way those pushovers would have a talent like that.”

“Jinseong Group’s Chairman Park Jinseong has him.”

“Then give Chairman Park Jinseong a call.”

“Yes.”

That afternoon, Smith Maglun got on a plane to Korea.

\*\*\*

“Smith Maglun?”

Maglun?

I think I’ve heard the name on the news.

“He was a senator in America.”

“Oh! Right. He was a subject of discussion as a presidential candidate or something, right?”

“Yes.”

“That person is coming to meet me? So, he knows about the Arena?”

“He more than knows.”

Said Cha Ji-hye.

“You could say that he is most powerful figure for the Arena.”

“Really?”

“The research center that the Maglun family runs has made the most advances in majeong technology.”

“Then China has to be careful of him.”

“That is a given. The fact that they are moving for their own personal gain is the same whether it is China or Maglun. China is just more forward about it but if Smith Maglun put his mind to it, he is more than capable of being extremely dangerous.”

“And a person like that is coming to Korea to meet me, is he sick too?”

“I haven’t heard of any news like that. As I recall, he had no prominent health issues. He is only just in his mid-50’s so I think he has some other situation.”

Does he have a sick family member like Odin?

Anyway, having such a figure come see me so soon, it made me happy.

While I am working with smith Maglun, I have no doubt that the Chinese won’t touch me.

About later that afternoon, I get a call from an unknown number.

-Is this Mr. Kim Hyun-ho?

I’m caught off guard.

This is a young man’s voice, in the Arena language.

“Yes, it is.”

-I am the man escorting Chairman Maglun. We have just arrived at the Incheon Airport.

“Already?”

I got the news that Smith Maglun was coming earlier this morning.

But he’s already here. The fact that a figure like him hurried so much to meet me was interesting. Just how significant is his illness?

-The chairman does not wish to draw the attention of the press. We will be staying at a nearby hotel so please meet us there.

“Will do.”

I ended the call and asked Cha Ji-hye.

“Would you like to come with me?”

“I am already considered as dead so it would be best not to draw any eyes towards me.”

“I think if you came with it would be of help when I make a deal.”

I thought Cha Ji-hye would mull that over for a bit but she nodded her head.

“I see. Okay.”

We went down to the basement garage together and got in the Porsche cayenne.”

\*\*\*

I parked the car at the hotel near the airport and we took a ride up in the elevator.

“Welcome.”

The man I had talked to on the phone was a tall and handsome white male with black hair.

“I am Kim Hyun-ho.”

“I am Cha Ji-hye.”

We greeted each other using the language from the Arena. The handsome black-haired man lightly smiled and led us in.

“Please, this way.”

It had already gotten dark and the stars could be seen on this terrace where a middle-aged man was seated at the table.

With a shaved head and long beard, he looked like someone from a Hollywood movie. From his suit to his shoes, his watch, everything on him looked super expensive.

He said something in English. I understood up to the “nice to meet you.”

“The chairman says nice to meet you and he has really been looking forward to seeing you in person.”

Said the handsome black-haired man. He must be in charge of translating.

Through his interpreting we carried on the conversation.

“I heard that you have the skill that healed Jinseong Group’s sick Chairman Park Jinseong. The chairman would like to be healed with this skill of yours.”

“I would like to know what he is sick from. To be honest, he looks very healthy.”

At that, the chairman’s face turned stern.

The black-haired handsome man said.

“He does not wish to divulge that information. Is that a part of the skill that you must know in order to heal it?”

“That is not so, since it is a skill that gives life energy and treats sickness and curses. But I too cannot guarantee anything. So how about he receives treatment for one week and then decides whether to continue or stop them after the trial week instead?”

The handsome black-haired man relayed my message to the chairman and Chairman Maglun nodded his head.

“He says that sounds good. He wishes to know what that cost will be and when it can begin.”

“I cannot do it today, treatment is possible starting tomorrow. And the price.....”

I let my sentence trail off and looked over to Cha Ji-hye.

Cha Ji-hye said in Korean.

“Unofficially, the Maglun family has ten times the wealth of

Jinseong group.”

“Really?”

“Yes, they do. About how much have you received for your treatments since you started healing people?”

“About 40,000,000 USD, 70,000,000 USD.”

“Is what you want most, money?”

“No. Honestly, I want the money to purchase karma.”

“Then say you want \$300,000,000 or an item worth 20,000 karma.”

I asked according to Cha Ji-hye’s suggestion.

The handsome black-haired man gave a look of disapproval while conversing with the chairman.

Chairman Maglun said something. The black-haired man translated it to us in the Arena language.

“You want karma.”

“Yes.”

“But getting such a large amount of karma is not easy. How about we pay \$100million and 10,000 karma.”

“Hmm.....”

Honestly, it was an unbelievably good deal for me but, first and foremost, I have to stay in control of my expression.

Then, Cha Ji-hye spoke up.

“Okay but half of that needs to be put up as a deposit. After that, starting tomorrow for a week, you will get a trial period of treatment and if you are not satisfied, that will be the end of our arrangement.”

The handsome black-haired man spoke with the chairman and afterwards, nodded his head.

“That is acceptable. Only, the karma cannot be acquired within a day. For the deposit we will put up the \$100 million.”

I shook my head.

“I want karma immediately. We are currently being targeted by the Chinese examinees.”

“Chinese?”

“Yes, Lee Chang-wee came to Korea due to a matter related to me. If I become his target, wouldn't I be in danger? I have to immediately acquire karma and get stronger.”

“Lee Chang-wee you say. Are you worried about him?”

The handsome black-haired man smirked.

“Would you stay here at this hotel with us for the week you do the treatments?”

“But what if Chairman Maglun gets caught up in this business?”

“Even if Lee Chang-wee himself were to attack, we would not have a problem. If I am here, Lee Chang-wee would dare to just attack.”

“Your name wouldn't happen to be Dana Litalin?”

Asked Cha Ji-hye.

The black-haired handsome man smiles and nods his head.

Cha Ji-hye nods her head in acceptance.

“Then I have no doubt we will not have any problems with Lee Chang-wee.”

“Who is he?”

I asked in Korean.

Cha Ji-hye replied.

“He is officially ranked in first place as the examinee with the most karma.”



My jaw dropped to the floor.

The man in front of me is the number one examinee in the world?

Finally, I realized why the only person Chairman Maglun brought with him was this handsome black-haired man.

The amount of aggregated karma isn't the only deciding factor in ranking how strong an examinee is, but being the official first place in it isn't a small feat.

Eventually I decided to take the 100 million dollars as the deposit for a week of treatments.

In the instance that he is cured, I will receive a karma prize item worth 10,000. When I change that into karma I will get 5,000 karma. It would be about the same as clearing an exam or two.

“So, ultimately, will we never get to know what the illness is?”

The handsome black-haired man, Dana Litalin, smiled at me.

“It is an embarrassing matter to divulge. Do you understand?”

“Oh, yes.”

I understood right away. That old magnate, it's definitely a matter of impotence!

..... for a problem like that, he'd be glad to pay any amount. Yes, definitely. I understood, as a man.

Starting that day, Cha Ji-hye and I stayed in the suite across from Maglun chairman.

Just the two of us staying together in a hotel did seem a little weird but thankfully the suite was so big that it wasn't awkward.

Actually, Cha Ji-hye is a fairly beautiful woman and as a man I couldn't help but be attracted to her.

After having to live apart from Min-jeong, I hadn't seen her much either. We sent text message back and forth every day but

oddly, physically being apart for so long, I got the feeling that our hearts were growing father too.

Every day, I gave chairman Maglun a flame of life. It was because I thought there was no need to heal him so fast.

I gave the other flame to Sylph and Kasa to share.

About four days since starting the treatment, Chairman Maglun looked very pleased with it.

“He says there is progress. He wishes to keep receiving these treatments.”

Dana Litalin relayed the message from Chairman Maglun.

“By progress he means.....”

“I’m sure he means he had a normal morning.”

Said Dana, with a smile. I’m a guy and when I looked at him, he’s so handsome my eyes would get big.

Anyway, having a normal morning after only a few days of treatment, sounds like he’ll be healed soon.

‘He’ll probably need about 2 weeks of treatment?’

In my Swiss account, Swiss francs worth \$100 million USD was deposited.

I called Odin and told him I wanted to get some karma.

-Lately it has become very difficult to acquire karma. I have heard that the Maglun family is amassing large amounts of karma. It is probably because of you.

“Oh, really?”

-Before, you bought karma with \$100 million. How many examinees do you think there are that sell their karma for money.

“I guess that’s that then.”

-I will try to find out more but I wouldn’t get my hopes up.

“Yes, I am very thankful to you for many things.”

-Please don't mention it. Let's meet again sometime. Bella misses you a lot.

“Haha, yes. I miss her too.”

It looks like it will be difficult to get any additional karma on top of the 10,000 karma that Maglun was getting for me.

## Chapter 107 – Spreading the Word (Part 3)

---

A week passed.

I went out on a date for the first time with Min-jeong in a while. She said.

“Oppa, what have you been doing lately?”

“Oh you know, just working.”

“It’s not like you went abroad but you aren’t home.....”

“I had a situation come up. I’ll be back home soon.”

“What situation?”

“.....”

I felt like we had just hit a fundamental problem in our relationship.

There were too many things that I just couldn’t tell her.

Because of that secret, I had to stop living with Min-jeong and recently, we haven’t been able to see each other much.

And every time she asked, all I could do was to say that I had a situation I couldn’t talk about.

From Min-jeong’s perspective, she could have gotten mad each time. I think that her being patient so far is a show of how much she sacrifices for me.

“Oppa, just what is it that you do? What do you do with Jinseong Group that you even keep it a secret from your family? I’m getting really frustrated now.”

“I’m sorry. I know how you must feel and I am so sorry and ashamed.”

“I keep thinking all sorts of thoughts. That maybe you are lying to get rid of me, or that if I make a surprise visit home there will be a woman there, or maybe we are just done now.....”

“It’s not like that!”

“How can I believe that?! Just why was it that I had to move out of that house, why do you have to keep it all a secret! I can’t understand it at all!”

“.....”

“Please say something. Does it have to do with a crime? No matter what it is you do, I will accept you!”

“.....”

“Please say something.”

Min-jeong started choking up with tears welling in her eyes.

That moment, I felt an urge.

‘Why do I have to keep it all a secret? Should I just tell her everything?’

I am an examinee.

I already died once, and going forward, I don’t know when I will die.

When the rest period is over, I have to go to a life or death fight to another world.

..... how do I tell her something like that!

In the end, I held my tongue.

We got in the car and I took her home.

All the way while we drove to the high rise condo studio I had got for her, min-jeong didn’t say a word.

My chest felt heavy.

‘It’s over.’

Lured into temptation and starting to love so easily was a mistake.

I was an examinee.

Never knowing when I would die, it wasn't right of me to start this relationship.

That our relationship would become so deep..... I had no idea.

'I'm sorry.'

With a heavy heart, I returned to the hotel.

When I got onto the elevator, a beautiful Caucasian woman got on with me and pushed the 14th floor's button. The same floor that I was going to.

'There are only 4 rooms on the 14th floor.'

Our eyes met and she smiled at me. I returned the gesture with a smile and nod.

After we both got off on the 14th floor, she went into Chairman Smith Maglun's suite.

'Oh my.'

I smiled.

He must be checking the effects of the treatment.

Then again, today is the last day of the one week trial treatment.

"Hey, you're back."

The next day, Cha Ji-hye and I went to Chairman Smith Maglun.

"What are your thoughts on the week of treatment?"

I asked.

Dana answered.

"The chairman is very pleased. He wishes to continue receiving the treatment."

That must mean he had a good time with the woman yesterday.

In that case, it is safe to say that Chairman Maglun's problem was fixed.

But since the last week was simple treatment, I think it would be a good idea to give him a flame of life a day for another week.

After doing some calculations in my head, I said.

“I will carry on the treatments for another week.”

Then Dana Litalin said something with Chairman Maglun and then said to me.

“He says that amount will not be enough.”

“Huh?”

“The chairman says that until he has confirmation from a doctor that the issue is resolved, the treatments must continue.”

I felt a bit flustered.

‘I hadn’t thought of that yet.’

Until the treatment is totally cured.

But because the flame of life was good for the body, even after being cured, that can be hidden and he can continue to request treatment.

‘I need to definitely put a nail on the treatment timeline.’

If I comply with his request, Chairman Maglun might greedily continue to ask for flames of life. How am I to know that what the doctor says isn’t fabricated.

So I said.

“The treatment time is two weeks total.”

“But before you said it is until cured?”

“I do apologize but I have changed my mind. The treatment time is always two weeks.”

“How will you take responsibility if he is not cured in those two weeks?”

“I will not take responsibility. The treatment time is 2 weeks

regardless of a cure. If that is not to his liking, the deal ends here.”

Dana Litalin talked again with chairman Maglun.

He spoke.

“He says that is different than what we agreed on. You definitely said until cured, and on those conditions he made the down payment of \$100 million.”

“That was the price for the week of trial treatment, and we definitely said that if he wasn’t satisfied, that the deal would end there. And Chairman Maglun properly verified the effects of treatment last night. Realistically, couldn’t we even say that he is fully recovered?”

“Only a doctor could determine that. Our side will provide you with the physician’s opinion.”

“I do not need that. The deal is done. Goodbye.”

I turned around and was about to leave Chairman’s Maglun’s suite.

Then, from behind my back, I heard Dana.

“Please wait a moment.”

I turned around.

Dana made his signature smile and spoke.

“The chairman says you are a boring man who does not know the fun of a negotiation.”

“I don’t find those kinds of negotiations to be fun.”

“But in order to survive in the Arena, you will have to get used to these things sometimes.”

“...”

“15 days.”

“One week.”



“Won’t you attempt to meet at a compromise? The more you stay with us, the safer you are from the dangers of Lee Chang-wee.”

“The remaining item worth 10,000 karma will be deposited first and then I will continue the treatment for 10 days. I will not compromise any further. Going forward, the treatment timeline will always be 2 weeks, no exceptions.”

Dana consulted with Chairman Maglun.

“He says that is acceptable. And we will even give the price we agreed upon right now.”

Dana extended his hand.

Pa pa pat!

20 item backpacks were summoned and spilled everywhere. Large item backpacks worth 500 karma. Altogether, the price totaled 10,000 karma.

I got a massive sum of karma again.

With a shaking heart, I gathered the item backpacks.

One by one I switched the ownership and retrieved the items to make them disappear.

“Then starting today for ten days, I will begin treatment. Flame of life!”

Hwa lu luk!

A flame appeared atop my hand.

I handed that over to Dana. Dana took it carefully and delivered it to Chairman Maglun.

Chairman Maglun immediately pushed it into his chest.

Perhaps from the feeling of vitality sourcing through him, he closed his eyes.

“I will head out now.”

“Very well.”

I returned to our suite with Cha Ji-hye.

“Retrieve, item bag, four.”

Four item bags appeared.

I handed those over to Cha Ji-hye.

“Take them.”

“Are you giving them to me?”

“I was able to beat the small Chinese man because of your help. All this time, I have received your help many times, this is the least I can do.”

“Thank you.”

Without any fuss, Cha Ji-hye calmly picked up each backpack.

This woman really has no modesty, she was just totally chill and I liked that.

“I was in need of an item bag, I’ll just keep one and change the rest to karma.”

“You won’t change them all into karma?”

“Getting food and water in the wild can be difficult. If I could skip that task, I will be able to move a lot faster.”

That is true. Hunting hasn’t been hard for me because I use Sylph, but it won’t be that easy for her.

Cha Ji-hye exchanged her three remaining backpacks for 750 karma.

I too exchanged my 16 backpacks for 4,000 karma.

‘Thank goodness the negotiation went well.’

I was honestly scared that Smith Maglun would use violence and threats to bully me.

Dana Litalin.

He was the official number one ranked examinee and was part of Maglun's entourage so that was a real possibility.

But thankfully, Smith Maglun was a very sensible man, and we were able to have a proper negotiation.

I discussed with Cha Ji-hye how to go about investing my 4,000 karma.

Cha ji-hye said.

"There doesn't appear to be a way to increase the strength of the power of your guns, your major attack method."

"Right?"

My thinking was the same.

I was able to master the ammo compensation skill so that it can pierce steel and I could also use the spirit summons while shooting.

Regardless of the examinee, it can be said that the one that is shot is going to the grave.

"Should I invest it in the spirit summons?"

"You are currently intermediate level 2 so with exactly 4,000 karma you could raise it to intermediate level 4. I am not sure that it will have that drastic an effect."

"Hm, that's true."

"And you said you could increase your spirit summons by feeding your spirits the flames of life, so how about using your karma elsewhere?"

"Then which skill should I raise? Maybe I should get a new skill....."

"Other than the double guns you have, the only other weapon of yours is the Mosin-Nagant?"

"Yes."

"Then what about changing your rifle to something else?"

“The Mosin-Nagant?”

“Yes, I am thinking you need an anti-material sniper rifle.”

“What is an anti-material sniper rifle?”

“It is a rifle used to shoot tanks or transport vehicles from a long distance. It is a rifle that pierces through armor, so what do you think would happen if YOU used one?”

“Ah.....”

A rifle used not to target humans but tanks and transport vehicles. According to Cha Ji-hye’s explanation, it is a strong weapon that could kill a target even if they were hiding behind a wall.

If I were to use it with the ammo compensation plus the power of Sylph and Kasa to make it more powerful.....!

“In the event that the opponent isn’t even aware of the attack, I think even Lee Chang-wee would be finished in one shot.”

“I think you’re right! Then I guess I’ll have to look into the anti-material sniper rifle.”

I gave a call to chief secretary Lee Jung-shik of the Ilsung Group.

-How can I help you?

Lee Jung-shik chief secretary of the 3rd secretarial office always answered his phone in a businesslike manner.

“Would you be able to obtain an anti-material sniper rifle?”

-That will not be a problem. I can get help from the ministry of national defense so if it is a weapon the Korean army possesses, it could get it to you in a couple days.”

“That sounds good. Please get it as fast as possible.”

I was so excited I could hardly wait.

A weapon so great that I could send a relatively large monster flying would soon be in my hands.

Of course it would probably cost an incredible amount to itemize it considering how powerful it is supposed to be.

‘I hope it can be itemized within 4,000 karma.’

After deciding roughly how to spend the karma, I worried about Cha Ji-hye’s situation and what she was going to do.

“Miss Ji-hye, what do you think you are going to do now?”

“Obviously I will clear all the exams.”

“No, not in the Arena, here.”

“I cannot yet reveal that I am alive. Chief Kim Joong-tae will try to kill me in any way possible since I know about his corruption.”

“Do you have anyone that will be worrying about you? Family or perhaps a significant other.....”

“I have neither family nor a significant other.”

Cha ji-hye replied with a short answer.

“Is it that you are uncomfortable about me staying with you?”

“Huh? Oh, no, of course not.”

“Then I will continue to be in your debt for a while.”

“.....”

## Chapter 108 – Skill Change (Part 1)

---

We ordered dinner from room service. Then we talked while drinking beer on the terrace.

I think Cha Ji-hye's personality was one that hated useless chatting, but we actually got along really well as she chatted with me.

Her life story was just a winding rollercoaster.

“When I was young, my parents died in a car accident and I grew up in an orphanage. There was a gym owner that would often come by the orphanage for volunteer work and I learned muay thai from him. That was my one delight.”

“.....”

“But he closed up his gym and moved to a different place and I became alone again. I had no money for college so I didn't even dream about going and entering the military was the best path out of all the options I had. It fit my physical constitution as well since I had some training already.”

Cha Ji-hye was downing several cans of beers as she looked out at the terrace view.

She suddenly glanced over at me and smiled.

“It is just you, Mr. Kim Hyun-ho.”

“What is?”

“You are the closest person I have.”

At those words, I felt my heart skip a beat.

Was it because it was night time?

Was it because the relationship between Min-jeong and I already had a foot in the grave?

Or was it because I've been drinking?

Cha Ji-hye had always been beautiful, but today she looked especially beautiful.

“Now that I’m a dead person, you are the only person that knows I am still alive. Isn’t that strange?”

“Yes, it is strange.”

She said it in a normal tone of voice but I could feel her emptiness and loneliness.

I could empathize with her too.

The only person that I could tell all my secrets to was her too.

The secret that I couldn’t bring myself to tell Min-jeong. I can tell it all to Cha Ji-hye.

She had already died once for me, she was the one woman I trusted the most in the world.

“I’m sorry.”

“What are you talking about?”

“That you died because of me.”

“It’s okay.”

“But it’s not okay. If it wasn’t for me, you wouldn’t have needed to become an examinee, you would’ve just gone on living.”

“I do not know what it means to go on living.”

“Excuse me?”

“I lived in reality for 29 years but didn’t know what it meant to be living. I just kept on breathing while I spent that in numbness.”

“.....”

“That’s why I was so interested in examinees. When I started working at the Korean Arena Research Agency, I felt satisfaction. Next to people fighting against death, watching them, I felt what it was to be alive.”

Cha Ji-hye continued to talk as she opened another can of beer.

“To live is to fight impending death. I longed for that feeling which is why when I met death, I chose to become an examinee.”

“You’re saying you wanted it?”

“Yes, personality-wise I wouldn’t say I enjoy using skills but I do like the exams. It gives my life a purpose it didn’t have before, and for the past 15 years that I spent close to death, it let me feel that I am alive.”

I understand why I felt such a strength coming from her.

The courage not to fear death.

As a person that fears death and has a strong attachment to life, it was a strength I could not emulate.

“Then what are you planning on doing once you clear all the exams?”

“I do not know. First of all, in the real world, I have the goal of bringing down chief Kim Joong-tae, but I suppose that will be taken care of by the time I complete the exams.”

I nodded my head.

If the goal was just killing chief Kim Joong-tae, realistically that was completely doable even now.

It would be as simple as sniping him from a distance. It would just be difficult to navigate the backlash thereafter.

“Do you not want a simple life? To meet someone to love and get married and have a child, that kind of life.”

“I don’t have any desires for such things. I might even be too familiar with solitude now.”

Cha Ji-hye got up from her seat.

“I’m going to bed first.”

“Okay.”



After Cha Ji-hye went into her room, I continued thinking about her on my own.

‘She’s definitely changed.’

I don’t think she realizes it herself.

But from my perspective, she is definitely different from before.

In the 15 years she spent in the Arena, she had become comfortable with her solitude.

It might even be that before she died and became an examinee, there was already solitude residing in her heart and it was just being expressed now.

‘If I keep doing the exams too, will I turn into this too?’

I too spent years on the Brown Mountain with the elves but I didn’t spend as long a time in the Arena like she did.

If I spend ages fighting, I felt that I too would become as lonely a person.

‘It doesn’t matter.’

As long as I live.....

As long as I pass the many obstacles and survive in the end, I don’t care about things like being lonely. My life is too precious.

\*\*\*

After spending four days treating Chairman Maglun, I got a call from chief secretary Lee Jung-shik.

-I have acquired the weapon you requested. It is rather a big item so it is hard to pass it onto you in a public space.

“I will go to retrieve it. Where should I go to get it?”

-The mountain cabin in Jincheon-gun in Chungbuk will be a good location.

“Got it.”

It was a bit far from here in Incheon but oh well. I'll just have to drive as fast as the wind.

After I told Cha Ji-hye that I'll be going to pick up the weapon, she insisted that she would come with since she didn't have anything to do alone at the hotel anyway.

We GOT in the Porsche Cayenne and I slammed on the gas pedal and we sped off crazily.

With the intent to pay any number of speeding tickets, I sped up.

A Porsche is indeed a Porsche. I had no experience driving other cars but with every step, the more I pushed, I felt the tantalizing sensation of the car shooting forward.

Cha Ji-hye, while in the passenger seat, no matter how much I sped up, couldn't care less. She actually gave me a compliment.

"You are a good driver."

"Thanks to the reflex skill."

The superior level 1 reflex skill made me the best driver. I'm at the stage where I can maneuver the car as delicately as my own body.

After racing all the way there, we arrived at the planned mountain cabin.

It only seemed like yesterday that I was here hunting with Chairman Park Jin-seong.

"You have arrived?"

Along with secretary Lee Jung-shik, there was several other men from the 3rd chief secretarial office.

From a large black van, they unloaded a large black case.

The weapon unloaded from the case.....

"Huk!"

I automatically let out a gasp.

The overall length looked to be about 1.5 meters, the heavy black rifle had a monstrous appearance.

“It is an item called the AW50F. I retrieved this one that was used by the police SWAT.”

At that, Cha Ji-hye walked ahead of me and approached and took the AW50F.

The man that handed Cha Ji-hye the rifle looked shocked as Cha Ji-hye effortlessly received the hand-off with one hand.

“It’s an item used by the 707th special mission battalion. It is my first time touching one.”

Cha Ji-hye must be excited because she fidgeted with the gun here and there and folded and unfolded the butt plate.

I searched for AW50F on my smartphone.

The information from the search on the AW50F is as follows.

-Type/Action: bolt action

-Cartridge: 12.7 mm

-Caliber: 50 BMG

Feed system: box magazine, 10 rounds

-Length: 1350 mm

-Weight: 13.5 kg

-Effective firing range: 1,500 m

‘Wow, um, wow.’

On your average widely used gun like a K2 rifle, the bullet was 5.56 mm. but this uses bullets over twice as big, 12.7 mm!

‘Shooting a human with this would blow them into bits and pieces.’

It’s awful just to imagine it. I hope I won’t ever have to use this on a human.

“Try shooting it.”

“What!”

At the coincidental timing, Cha Ji-hye spoke and it startled me.

“Why are you so surprised?”

“Oh, nothing. Give it here.”

Cha Ji-hye threw me the AW50F. Its weight was probably about 13.5 kg but I grabbed it easily with one hand. Sure enough, I could feel how much heavier this was compared to the Mosin-Nagant.

“Here are the bullets.”

At Lee Jung-shik’s words, the men brought over a couple boxes of bullets and magazines.

With Cha Ji-hye’s help, I put in ten .50 cal BMG caliber bullets.

I pulled on the bolt to load the gun and took aim.

‘Where should I shoot?’

After some pondering, I aimed at a nearby boulder.

It felt a bit awkward because this one had an attached scope that the Mosin-Nagant didn’t have.

“Sylph, Kasa.”

-Meow.

-Bark!

Two spirits appeared.

The spirits already knew what to do and hopped on top of my shoulders and focused on the AW50F I was holding.

“Sylph, get rid of the gunshot, please.”

-Meow.

Sylph nodded her head.

‘Good.’

An anti-material sniper rifle with bullet compensation, Sylph, and Kasa, this was the most powerful I could be!

I pulled the trigger.

Thanks to Sylph's sound elimination, the sound of a gunshot didn't ring out. But the heavy recoil and ripping sound of the bullet splitting the air sounded terrifying.

And at nearly the same time,

Kwaaang!

The large boulder shattered.

Literally, it shattered.

The boulder became tens of tiny rocks and rolled away in all directions.

At the power that mercilessly shattered the large boulder, I was at a loss for words.

Secretary Lee Jung-shik and his boys from the office also looked just as shocked.

Alas, the only neutral-faced Cha Ji-hye was able to calmly say/

“At the very least, no person shot by this will be safe.”

“Um. I suppose.”

I was in love with this AW50F.

No matter how long the distance, I have Sylph to make sure I have a 100% accuracy rate, I felt like as long as I had this, I was unbeatable.

“Retrieve board.”

The board appeared.

“I want to itemize this.”

Then the words twitched and changed on the board.

-AW50F: a bolt action anti-material sniper rifle. Uses large

caliber bullets and thus has high power, also very durable. (-3,300)

\*Effective firing range: 1,500

-Would you like to use 3,300 karma to itemize AW50F?

-Remaining karma: +4,000

‘Definitely expensive!’

3,300 karma! This was an amount of karma only that could be attained with a stellar performance on an entire exam.

I’m pinning it all on this one weapon.

‘But it is totally worth it!’

I gladly consented to the itemizing.

-AW50F has been registered as an item. Say ‘arm’ or ‘disarm’ in order to freely summon the item.

-3,300 karma has been used.

-Remaining karma: +700

The great anti-material sniper rifle called the AW50F was now my new weapon and I felt much better.

‘Now that I’m on it I should organize.’

I took out all of the 7.62 mm bullets used for the Mosin-Nagant and handed it all over to secretary Lee Jung-shik and asked him to take care of the disposal of them.

And I turned the Mosin-Nagant into karma.

I had gotten rid of the sight and front sight to itemize it for 200 karma so the exchange gave me back 100 karma.

Now the remaining karma was 800.

‘What skill should I raise with this?’

Even if I were to immediately raise the level, there wasn’t a skill that would really improve my fighting.

‘Hold on, the bullets are a lot bigger than the Mosin-Nagant?’

The .50 BMG caliber bullets used for the AW50F are extremely big.

The space bag I created with the skill synthesis is 100cm width, length, and height and is an ample storage space.

But including the fact that I have to store in the .357 magnum bullets in there that are used in the Neilson H2's, I couldn't safely say it was ample space anymore 'Okay. I'll increase the space so that I can store plenty of food and water too.'

I used all my karma on the space bag that was at entry level 4.

To entry level 5, then intermediate level 1, it used 700 karma to go up two levels.

But when the space bag reached intermediate level 1, an incredible change happened.

## Chapter 109 – Skill Change (Part 2)

---

-Space bag (synthesis skill): create a virtual space in which to store things. Retrieve with orders to ‘place’ and ‘take out’.

\*Intermediate level 1: 200cm x 200cm x 200cm, allowed to carry electronic equipment ‘Electronic equipment?’

Then does that mean I could take a laptop? Smartphone?

There was no reception in the Arena so calling would be impossible but even so, I think that a smartphone would still be really useful.

I could take pictures with the camera and there were a lot of useful apps too.

‘I’ll take the smartphone along with a solar charger.’

And there was plenty of space, stretching 2 meters in every direction. I could take plenty of food, water, and other things I needed.

After receiving the AW50F and 50 BMG cal bullets, Cha Ji-hye and I returned to the hotel.

On the way back, I told Cha Ji-hye about the space bag skill change.

“Are you saying electronics are allowed?”

“Yes.”

“That is great news. In America, they had a project to try and shoot up a satellite in the Arena but it ultimately failed.”

“I think I’ve heard that before too.”

“They even tried to take the separate parts and assemble it inside the Arena, but Earth science does not work there.”

“But it is now possible for me?”

“Yes. I think probably your special skill, the skill synthesis, is



what enabled such a skill to be born.”

“A satellite.....”

It would be really great if something like a reconnaissance satellite could be sent up into the Arena space and monitor the area.

Because of the satellite, long distance communication could become possible, and a lot of things could become convenient.

“In some ways, you have gotten a skill far more important than the flame of life.”

Said Cha Ji-hye.

“The reason America tried to launch a space satellite into the Arena is simple. It was because if they could control information and communication through their satellite, they would be able to dominate in the Arena. Overpowering China, who has the most examinees, would just a matter of time.”

“..... then that means America has the means to launch a satellite in the Arena atmosphere.”

“Most likely. As I heard, they harness majeong for the propulsion power and are trying to combine magic and science.”

“A satellite.....”

A tiny satellite no bigger than 10 cm can be made by an enterprise or college, even just a single person could make one too.

If one figures out the way to launch it into the atmosphere, long distance communication becomes possible.

That alone would be of great benefit.

“Is America a trustable nation?”

I asked.

“America only moves with its own interests. If both interests align and if you can both benefit, you can make a sensible

relationship.”

“Interests.....”

I was deep in thought.

If we launched a communications satellite, I could always communicate with the elves on Brown Mountain and Odin, the Count of Wolfenbrooke.

It was just a means of communication but, from a long-term point of view, there wasn't a stronger advantage.

As communication becomes clearer, even if we are far apart, close cooperation becomes possible.

“I don't know about the U.S., but first I think I'll consult with Odin at the Nordic Examinee Group.”

“That is a good decision. The Nordic examinee Group is strong and competent. At the present point in time they are the friendliest power.”

While we're on the subject, I gave Odin a call.

-Did you just say you can take electronics to Arena?

“Yes.”

-That is incredible. If it could just be usable, there are a multitude of electronics that would be very useful in the Arena.

“Speaking of, I heard that America tried to send up a satellite in Arena.”

-Satellite? I see! If you do it, it will be possible!

Odin was getting excited.

“I was thinking of taking a small communications satellite that I can carry and launching it to build a long-distance communications network.”

-That is an impressive idea. It isn't just the U.S. but examinees from all countries want to have a way to communicate.

According to Odin's explanation, it's not like there isn't a long-distance communication in the Arena.

It is communications magic but you have to be able to use communication magic and there is a distance limit.

"On this topic, I would like to work with the Nordic Examinee Group as well. Wouldn't there be a lot of benefit to the Nordic examinees as well if they could communicate with each other?"

-Of course, it would be. If you would work with us on this, we would be willing to pay a generous amount for this.

Odin actively accepted my proposal.

-First let me consult with our Nordic Examinee Group's tech researchers. A small and light communication satellite...they might have a way to propel it into orbit.

"Okay, I'll eagerly await your call."

After I ended the call, Cha Ji-hye commented.

"The Nordic examinee group will probably try to recruit you."

"Most likely."

"You can now accomplish what America tried so desperately to do and failed at. If the space bag level increases and the space get bigger, you will be able to take and launch even a spy satellite. No matter how grand the demands, the Nordic examinee group will oblige them all."

"Hm, I'll have to think about what demands to make."

Money wasn't important.

As for money, I could always make more with the flame of life.

The first think I need to ask for is the personal safety of my family.

Of course, even now, thanks to the help of Chairman Park Jin-seong, there are people secretly protecting my family.

But that was not enough.

I need a power that could keep China in check.

My country cannot provide that for me. That bastard chief Kim Joong-tae, the one responsible for the whole of the Korean Arena Research Agency, sold me out to the Chinese.

But it would be possible with the Nordic examinee group. There is Odin's tendency of despising the Chinese as well.

Right when we arrived at the hotel.

Ring, ring.

Odin was calling me back.

“Hello?”

-I am calling immediately after consulting with the researchers. Getting straight to the point, it is possible. Making a tiny comm satellite isn't all that hard or difficult to get.

“And a means of getting it up?”

-They said they can use majeong for the power and create a device that can propel it. But the issue is that this won't just take a month or two.

“I figured as much.”

-Anyhow, would you come to Denmark again?

“Denmark?”

-Yes. There is the aforementioned problem of the satellite, and lots of consulting to do. There is also a person in need of your treatments.

“Treatment?”

I'll be able to make a lot of money again.

-While you are here, our security team will make every effort to protect your family.

“If the Chinese examinees come for them, a normal security team won’t stand a chance.”

-I will be dispatching three examinees to Korea.

“Three people that are examinees for the protection of my family?”

I’m so surprised.

Odin continued.

-They will only intervene in case of an emergency. I have the support of some examinees who want to explore Korea.

With that much, it should be plenty to ensure my family is safe.

Then I suddenly thought of Cha Ji-hye.

Cha Ji-hye has been presumed dead and it was impossible for her to leave the country.

“What about Cha Ji-hye?”

-That won’t be a problem. I will arrange for her transport via the Denmark embassy in Korea.

“Thank you for doing that. We can leave in a week’s time when Chairman Maglun’s treatment is over.”

-Okay. Someone will get you at that time.

\*\*\*

When the treatment finished, Chairman Maglun and Dana Litalin left Korea.

As he was leaving, Chairman Maglun asked if I would like to come to America with him.

“With your abilities, you can live in America as a very important and distinguished person. And America has the power to protect you from the Chinese. The Chairman wishes to become your benefactor.”

“That is a good offer. Please tell him I will sincerely think about it. Thank you both for your kindness.”

I lightly replied.

Chairman Maglun didn't insist further and smiled as he left for Incheon airport.

‘What Chairman Maglun wants was just the flames of life.’

If he had found out about the space bag being intermediate level 1, his eyes would have lit up and he would have tried to recruit me no matter what.

We checked out of the hotel and Cha Ji-hye and I returned home.

I suddenly got a call from Hyun-ji.

“Sup, chicken.”

-Don't call me chicken!

She's so dumb but won't let go of that pride, Hyun-ji. Most businesses had begun recruiting half a year ago but our Hyun-ji had yet to hear back from anyone.

-Oppa, did something happen with you and Min-jeong?

“..... why?”

-Min-jeong wants me to tell you she's moving into a studio close to work.

“Really? Okay.”

-Don't say okay, what did you fight about?

“Oh, something just came up. Butt out.”

-Hmph, oppa did you really get another girl?

“Butt out.”

-Aren't you worried? Who told you to date your baby sister's best friend!

Ugh.

Does she think she has no faults?

“That’s that but anyway I’ve been looking at your credit card activity and you’re slowly creeping up on the bills? You’ve started eating all three meals out and how many times are you going to the café a day? And last week you bought \$280 heels without my permission.....”

-Oh um, I’m busy, I got to go!

Hyun-ji hurriedly ended the call. Tsk, misbehaving.

But after the call, with an expressionless face, Cha Ji-hye was straight on staring at me.

“Was that your younger sister?”

“Yes, she’s very annoying.”

“But even so, it looks very enjoyable.”

“Oh, did it?”

“Yes.”

“Hahaha.”

I awkwardly laughed and scratched my head.

“We have to do go Denmark tomorrow so I will head in and be preparing.”

“Okay, sounds good. If there is anything you need, buy it on my card.”

“Understood.”

Cha Ji-hye walked into her room.

Somehow, she looked so lonely. Was I being too disrespectful in front of her since she was without any family or friends?

I felt a little guilty.

‘I’ll be careful going forward.’

\*\*\*

The next day, people from the Denmark embassy came to get us. We followed them into the car and got started.

“Please take this.”

They handed us passports.

The pictures are of us but the names and birthdays were completely different.

“They are fake temporary ID’s. when you have to travel in secret, please use those.”

Maybe they received help from the Denmark authorities because we got through the airport without any problems and got on a plane straight way.

When we got to the Copenhagen airport, there was a car provided by the Denmark authorities waiting for us.

This time, it wasn’t the hotel restaurant that I always went to.

“Where are we going?”

At my question, the embassy employee that was coming with us said in broken Korean, “To the Nordic examinee group.”

I was completely surprised.

I’ve met with Odin so many times but have never been there, yet this time we were headed straight there.

Cha Ji-hye had no reaction to this like always and just stared at the world outside.

It looks like after she became an examinee, she has worn out all of her feelings.



# Chapter 110 – Trend (Part 1)

---

The car made its way to a remote area far from the center of Copenhagen.

We went up a barely-there road, when a medieval western castle hidden in the forest revealed itself.

“Woah!”

I was in awe at a castle that I had only seen in storybooks and cartoons.

The old castle seemed like it had been remodeled to look more modern, but the antiquity and sophistication was still unmatched.

The castle gates were made to automatically open and close.

The employee got out of the car and verified his fingerprint and scanned his iris and the gates clunked open.

Several people came out to greet us, and among them I saw Odin and Neilson.

“Welcome.”

Odin greeted us warmly.

“You are still alive.”

The man who made my Neilson H2 double guns, Neilson Oslan, gave me a short-spoken welcome.

After we exchanged greetings, a gray haired middle-aged man standing near Odin and Neilson, opened his mouth.

Seeing that he spoke in a foreign language that I couldn't understand, he wasn't an examinee.

Odin translated for me.

“He is Vilhelm Heinz, in charge of exam research. He has been desperately waiting for your arrival.”

“Please tell him it’s a pleasure to meet him.”

Through translation, we exchanged greetings and all headed into the building headquarters.

Unlike the outside of the castle that was wrapped in stones, the inside had a clean modern style.

Coming out to the third floor terrace, I could see the entire castle’s surroundings in one glance. A clear and blue sky, mountains, forest, not a modern building in site, a medieval landscape.

Of course, the terrace was covered in glass so the cold wind couldn’t penetrate and it was well insulated.

The five of us sat around a round table. People brought us coffee and cookies.

Odin then spoke.

“First, I shall tell you of the trend of the exams.”

“I’m all ears.”

“Looking at the collective data that is divulged from the various countries in the Arena international League of Nations, all examinees in the world are converging into the same time zone.”

“Time zone.....?”

“As you know, Mr. Kim Hyun-ho, for every examinee, the rest period and the day the exams begin along with the amount of time spent in the Arena are all very different.”

“Yes. Cha Ji-hye here just started the exams not too long ago and she is already a 6th turn examinee like me and has spent 15 years in the Arena.”

Cha Ji-hye made a small nod of agreement.

Odin continued to say.

“But that time difference starting to decrease and the timing of

everyone's exams are becoming the more and more similar."

The time an examinee spends in the Arena varies. But no matter how long you spend in the Arena, only one night passes in the real world.

Most likely, this variation in time is the work of the gods and angels.

"I will ask one thing. I have 42 days left for the rest period, what about you, Kim hyun-ho?"

I summoned my board to verify and was surprised.

"I have 42 days left too."

"It has to be. Last time, through the Brown Mountain elf problem, you and I created a relationship. On the other hand, Miss Cha Ji-hye spent 15 years in the Arena but only for a short amount of time in the real world passed by. I am guessing that it was in a secluded, very out of the way, remote area?"

"Yes, it was."

Answered Cha Ji-hye.

Odin gestured to Neilson.

"And Neilson here is also spending a longer time in the Arena than other examinees. He is living alone in an area where no one is nearby so that such a large time difference is easily solved."

The reason examinees usually have their first exam in an unpopulated by human area is probably for this same reason.

"Then that means that all examinees converging into the same time zones is....."

"That means that nearly all examinees are in situations where they are connected to each other. In more detail, examinees are exercising more power and influence in the current Arena society, and means that we are getting closer to the ultimate destination of the exams."

“So someone could reach the final destination pretty soon then?”

The ultimate goal of the exams...only one person had to succeed.

Amongst all the examinees, if one person achieved the goal then the exams would be over. All examinees would be freed from the Arena.

Of course, as of right now, this was all just conjecture but according to everything that has revealed itself so far, it was highly probable.

“Now that I look at it, I have 52 days left on my rest period.”

Said Cha Ji-hye.

Odin nodded his head.

“In that case, in your next exam, you will probably make it out of the remote area. Like this, there are many examinees reaching the end objective. But that last exam won’t be that easy to complete.”

“Why is that?”

“The corrupt examinees.”

With that phrase, everything was explained.

“China and Indonesia are representatives of this but they aren’t the only people of those nationalities doing stuff like that. America, Japan, and many other examinees from other countries are of the opinion that not completing the exams is better.”

“Because of the majeong.”

“That’s right. Like the Maglun family you recently met, there are many capitalists invested in majeong collection and research. Regrettably, it is those capitalists that steer the world.”

“What about the Nordic examinee group? Do the Nordic countries want the exams to continue too?”

I asked.

Odin stared straight at me.

“Mr. Kim Hyun-ho, it is good to trust us. We are unlike other agencies from other countries. Because the Nordic exam group wasn’t founded by the country, but by the examinees gathered. Then I personally created the group.”

Odin continued to speak.

“Afterwards, we got the support of the country and became an official organization, but the core commitment of the examinees are to clear these exams.”

I stared at Cha Ji-hye.

Cha Ji-hye nodded her head. I figured it meant she’s saying he’s not lying.

“But the country, meaning politicians and capitalists that shape government intuitions, doesn’t have the same mentality as us. They might not behave as blatantly as the Chinese, but they will gradually move to interfere with others to stop them from clearing the exams.”

After hearing this, my heart grew heavy.

Just the other day, the Smith Maglun that I treated was a capitalist heavily invested in businesses related to the Arena.

For that business to succeed, examinees had to continue to bring majeong back from the Arena.

I became afraid at the thought that a tycoon like Chairman Maglun could become an obstacle blocking my progress.

Will I ever be freed from the exams?

“The reason I am telling you these things is because I wish to recruit you. Of course Miss Cha Ji-hye too.”

Said Odin.

“The Korean government and even Chairman Park Jin-seong cannot protect you guys. The danger isn’t only present in our real world but it will grow stronger in the Arena as well. To combat

that, the few genuine examinees like us need to band and combine our strengths.”

“I agree. And that is why I requested the help from the Nordic Examinee Group.”

“You thought well. Your capabilities, Kim Hyun-ho, will be a big strength to us.”

For now we’ll postpone my joining the Nordic examinee group. For now, I will continue to go forward in a cooperating relationship.”

“Then let’s get into the topic of the hour. First off, the satellite problem is moving along well. We have decided to acquire an observation satellite that a Swiss research agency was creating and turning that into a recon satellite.”

“Really?”

“And the problem of using majeong for the power to shoot it into the atmosphere isn’t difficult, but some more research needs to be done for calculating the trajectory and controlling the satellite remotely.”

Odin smiled and continued talking.

“But the communication issue can be considered as a secondary problem, but we have some very useful electronic equipment.”

“What is it?”

“I’ll show you soon.”

Then Odin had a conversation with Vilhelm Heinz, the research chief.

Vilhelm stood up and gestured to us.

We got up and followed Vilhelm somewhere.

We got on the elevator and went to basement level 5.

The basement level 5 was a research facility. People that

appeared to be researchers were wrestling with computers or busy running around.

Vilhelm led us into a deeper section inside.

Eventually we got to the innermost research room.

In a large rectangular room were a couple of suits that looked like scuba suits.

It looks similar to the battle suits from the Korean arena research agency.

“Are they like battle suits?”

I asked.

Odin said.

“A battle suit it is. But it is an object that has the advanced technology from northern Europe.”

It was probably a battle suit that had some kind of electronic device built in.

Vilhelm smiled as he said something to me and pointed to the battle suit.

I couldn't understand what he was saying but he was probably telling me to try it on.

I tried nodding my head.

Vilhelm input the secret code into the keypad on the glass case.

Ring.

The glass case opened. Vilhelm took out a battle suit and handed it to me, and pointed to a changing space on the side, drawn over with a curtain.

I opened the curtain in the changing room and got out of my clothes and changed into the battle suit.

‘Something is attached to the back.’

There was a small electronic about 10cm large attached to the back.

This must be the electronic device that gave the suit its special abilities.

Interestingly, this battle suit even has room for fingers and toes so it took a while to get on.

I barely got the battle suit on and came out of the changing room.

‘Huh?’

I could tell something felt different. My steps were so light it felt weird.

I felt strange and Odin said.

“How does it feel?”

“My body is lighter.”

“That isn’t all.”

Odin presented his palm to me and said.

“Hit it.”

“What?”

“Hit it with the strongest punch you can throw.”

“Alright.”

Odin was a strong man that is also an aura master.

I don’t think his wrist will break because I punched as hard as I could.

I got into the boxing stance I learned before.

But the weird thing was Odin’s demeanor.

Odin lowered his posture and raised a blue aura all over his body. A defense prepared for a strong attack.

‘How strong does he think my punch will be?’



I was a physical strength buff intermediate level 5 so I do have the body that was at the limits to a male elf.

However, his aura control was at a superior level and I couldn't surpass Odin, an aura master.

I got a strange feeling but I didn't think much could happen so I threw my best straight.

But then,

Shwook—

My fist flew forward like a rocket. As if someone was controlling my arm, a strength beyond imagination.

Bbuuuuk!

The punch landed on Odin's extended hand.

Despite using his aura to combat it, Odin was pushed backwards.

“What, um, is this?”

I asked in complete surprise at the amplified power.

“It is synthetic muscle.”

Answered Cha Ji-hye.

Odin nodded his head.

“It's something we developed in the beginning. It was developed using the loophole that what one wears is carried with them into Arena. But it ultimately failed because it didn't activate in the Arena.”

“This is a synthetic muscle suit?”

In shock, I looked down at the synthetic muscle suit I was wearing.

Like a scuba suit, it was fairly thin and flexible. That this is a suit with cutting edge technology, synthetic muscle, I couldn't help but be in shock.

“It is light and thin and thus comfortable for movement and also multiples strength by 20-fold. The suit has the best sensors and proprioceptors that measure the strength of the body, and this total is monitored through the muscles’ electronic signals. When wearing this, controlling your strength should be as natural as moving your own body.”

Right at the end of the description, research chief Vilhelm handed me a paper cup filled with water.

He wanted me to take it.

‘If I can’t control the multiplied power, I’ll crush this paper cup.’

I carefully took the paper cup from him.

“Huh?”

I’m surprised again.

Because I naturally took the cup from him.

“Wow, this is incredible.”

The built in AI and sensors were perfectly controlling the amount of power needed for every task.

Just like my own body.

“What do you think if you could take that with you to the Arena?”

## Chapter 111 – Trend (Part 2)

---

“This would really be amazing if it could be used in the Arena!”

My current body already had the physical strength buff at intermediate level 5 and boasted impressive capabilities.

But with this I could use up to twenty fold my current muscle ability?

Jumping, attacking, and speed even will all increase by 20 times!

‘Not only that, but the sensor was incredible. It doesn’t feel unnatural at all!’

I put force into just my big toe and attempted to jump.

A big jump and I leaped 1 meter in the air. I barely used the strength of a tip toe, that little strength, and it’s this much.

On top of that, I can control it to the point of grabbing a paper cup with ease. Which meant I wouldn’t accidentally break my guns when I pulled the trigger!

Odin said,

“We want you, Kim Hyun-ho, to take this synthetic muscle suit to the Arena for us. If you could, you two would obviously get one, and we would offer separate compensation for it.”

Research chief Vilhelm said something too and Odin translated it for us.

“He says he will pay 3,000,000 francs per suit. On top of that, is the conditions that our Nordic exam group’s will continue to protect your family.”

3,000,000 in Swiss francs is in Korean money 3,300,000,000 won. (TLN: \$3 million USD) Considering that it was just a delivery charge, it was an incredible amount!

But thinking about the synthetic muscle suit that increases

muscle power by 20 times, it wasn't really an expensive price either.

Basically, if examinees with superhuman physiques used this muscle suit, what would happen?

That result was something that couldn't be measured just in monetary value.

'But money isn't what's important.'

Having allies that are strong like the Nordic exam group, on my side, was more significant.

I could always make money with the flames of life.

I nodded my head.

"First, I will deliver ten units. Can I deliver them to your territory?"

"Yes. I can hold them until our examinees visit my area and pick one up each."

"On that note, amongst the delivery, please save one for Miss Cha Ji-hye."

"Of course."

On the account of delivering 10 suits to Odin's Count Wolfenbrooke, I am to receive 30,000,000 francs. (TLN: 30 mil USD) When Cha Ji-hye leaves the tropical swamps and gets a chance, she will stop by Wolfenbrooke's territory and pick up the synthetic muscle suit.

We talked a lot about the other electronics I would be taking to the Arena.

It seemed the Nordic exam group brainstormed a lot of ideas upon hearing about the capabilities of my space bag skill.

They said they are working on a radio wave transmitter-receiver that uses majeong to increase thrust and send the signal to a wide

area.

As long as the person was within that scope of the signal, a phone call would be possible.

“Our Nordic exam group has spent time a lot of time to develop a good amount of uses for majeong and, if it goes well, we can create a transmitter that at most can cover 2000 km, before the next exam.” (TLN: 1,240 miles) “A whole 2000 km? That’s incredible.”

“With that distance, don’t you think something like a huge communication satellite won’t be needed?”

“I completely agree.”

The entire distance from Seoul to Busan is roughly 400 km. with 2000 km that was plenty to cover the distance between the Brown Mountains and Wolfenbrooke’s territory.

We talked about this and that and suddenly it was evening.

Research Chief Vilhelm Heinz said he’ll leave work and took off, and the rest of us decided to get dinner and headed to a restaurant.

“There is someone I wish to introduce to you.”

I kind of have an idea who.

“Someone that needs my treatments?”

“Indeed.”

“Is it a disease?”

“It is not a scientific/medical problem. She is a healthy 23 year old woman.”

“If it is not a medical problem, will I be of any help?”

“Her life is precarious. She is desperately grasping at straws and she is asking for your help.”

“She is an examinee.”

Deduced Cha Ji-hye.

With a surprised face, Odin looked at her then nodded.

“She is.”

Cha Ji-hye said to me,

“It is probably a problem of a curse.”

“A curse?”

Instantly, I recalled the dark magician I fought in the last exam, John Omento.

He too had used some curse to sicken the Tree of Life.

“Even if she did get cursed, won’t she recover once she passes through the exam door?”

“The body recovers.”

But the curse doesn’t go away?

“Something like that can happen?”

I became suspicious.

A curse that doesn’t disappear when you pass through the exam door?

There is something that the exam door, created by gods and angels, can’t cure?

“A psychogenic curse.”

Said Cha Ji-hye again.

With an impressed face, Odin said,

“You do know a lot. Yes, it is a psychogenic curse. The curse itself disappears, but in this instance, the mental agony from that curse is left in the head.”

“Then realistically, the thing I have to cure is psychological problem, not the curse?”

“Yes.”

“Wouldn’t it be better to seek the help of a psych doctor?”

“Do you think she wouldn’t have tried that?”

I shut my mouth at Odin’s remark.

I’m sure she has.

“The mental agony that a curse leaves is a level that is not possible in reality, therefore it is not a level that can be handled at a psych mental health facility.”

Neilson, who had long been silent, spoke up.

“She has attempted suicide three times so she is under 24/7 supervision. It’s a pity, she is a young gal.”

I don’t know if the psychological aftereffect can be cured by flames of life.

No matter, I had to try.

We got to the restaurant on the first floor when.

“I said don’t touch me – ! I’ll kill you!!”

A female voice was shouting loudly in the Arena language.

A Caucasian woman with pure white skin, like a wax figure. Long blonde hair with large eyes, sharp nose, a classic beauty.

The situation is in the corner of the restaurant where she was sitting, surrounded by several examinee group employees.

They didn’t know what to do in the hysteria of this woman.

“Marie!”

Yelled Odin.

As soon as he shouted, the blonde beauty known as Marie saw him and went quiet.

“I told you to behave!”

As Odin approached her and scolded her, Marie looked quite uncomfortable and turned her head away and shrugged it off.

She was throwing such a loud fit, now she's calmed in front of Odin.

Here, I can sense how big Odin's status in the Nordic exam group was.

"You didn't self-injure or anything again?"

Odin grabbed her wrists and checks them out around.

Marie angrily tried to shake her hands free from Odin. Like a father and a teenage daughter.

Then her eyes fell on me and Cha Ji-hye and her eyes sharpened.

"Who are you?"

"They are the people I told you about."

"I said I don't need it!"

"Whether you need it or not, I decide."

With that snappy comment, Odin said to me,

"This woman is Marie Johanna and she is 23 this year. In her case, she died through suicide and became an examinee, she used to be well-behaved but she has changed to be this temperamental because of the curse."

Marie Johanna looked disgusted that Odin was telling us her private information.

"Well, hello."

I offered a greeting.

Marie abruptly turned her head away and ignored me.

Feeling embarrassed, I scratched my head.

"Can I be of any help?"

"Please try. You will be rewarded."

"Understood."



I made a flame of life.

Then Marie, who had been ignoring me, turned her eyes towards the flame of life.

I handed the flame of life towards her.

“Eat it.”

“You want me to eat that?”

Marie scowled.

“It’s tasty.”

I said jokingly.

Marie stared intently at the flame of life, thinking it over.

Odin grilled her.

“Hurry, eat it.”

Marie gave a coy look, then took the flame of life. She halted momentarily then swallowed the flame.

Su lu luk.

The flame entered her body.

Her expression that was full of anger and evil, gradually became calmer.

I was thinking that the energy the flame was giving her made her feel better.

“Didn’t I say it was tasty?”

I joked, laughing.

Then, Marie Johanna stared at me. Then,

‘Huk!’

Then, with a heart piercing beautiful, she smiled.

Such a bright smile, she extended her hand.

“.....?”

With a suspicious look on my face, Marie stared at me.

Her expression was like a child asking for something to eat. Is that.....

“I think she is asking for more.”

Said Odin with an air of annoyance.

“It’s not that I can’t give her more, but shouldn’t we check that it is effective? This is expensive.”

Some rich man in America with his head hung low, spent an astronomical amount of money to eat these.

Marie looked at me with such a pitiful expression, as if asking if I really won’t give her any more.

‘Gung!’

I won’t be swayed by beauty again!

I slowly shook my head.

With a dispirited expression, Marie put down the hand she extended to me. And her head hung down.

“Let’s eat first and we can talk slowly.”

We all sat down in our seats.

Odin and Neilson sat on either side of Marie and I sat alongside Cha Ji-hye.

But then, Marie just stared straight at me again, then looked back and forth between me and Cha Ji-hye.

Her beautiful blue eyes with double eyelids, shook.

It looked like her head was full of complicated thoughts.

Having decided, Marie got up and came around from the other side, to me.

She eased the chair close and sat really close to me.

‘Uh, what is this?’

When I gave her a strange look, she smiled again.

This was my first time experiencing such blatant flirting and I felt flustered and thought about how absurd this was all at once.

Odin let out a deep sigh.

“Her mental health was not on the good side originally, but her condition has gotten much worse after the curse.”

‘Basically, she’s a bit gone in the head.’

At first glance, she appeared that way.

At Odin’s remark, Marie looked angry again.

She threw the fork that was on the table.

Shwik!

I was completely surprised.

Because the fork was thrown like an arrow, but of course Odin quickly grabbed it with his left hand.

“I said to stop this shit!”

“Humph!”

Marie linked her arm into mine and snorted. As if she has deemed me her protector.

Within five minutes of meeting, she was treating me as if we were friends that had known each other for a long time.

“It is a mental regression.”

Cha Ji-hye looked at us and said lightly.

Regardless of what you call this, this woman is crazy for sure.

The restaurant employees brought us steak and salad and soup.

And when I picked up the knife and fork to cut the steak.

Marie had picked up her knife first and quickly she started to cut the steak on my plate.

Shwi shwi shwi shwi shwi shwik—

1 second?

It was but a moment. The steak was cut into even bits.

I was speechless at her lightning speed.

Neilson smiled and said,

“She might look like a crazy bitch, but she is a 24th turn veteran. As I understand, she is an aura control intermediate level 10. I heard she has mastered an assassination skill as her assist skill.”

Marie looked at me and her smile that was innocent and bright. With a knife in her hand.

I got a creepy feeling.

# Chapter 112 – Entering the 7<sup>th</sup> exam (Part 1)

---

Eventually, we agreed to 100 million francs for 14 days of treatment. (TLN: 100 million USD) It was unknown if the flames of life would restore her psyche, but Odin maintained that he was more than happy to pay for it.

Honestly, in light of my relationship with the Nordic exam group, that was an enormous discount.

The cost was about half of what I got from Chairman Maglun.

Also, the treatment is just 14 days but I agreed to give two flames of life per day.

After eating the flames of life, Marie's frequency of episodes had shrunk considerably.

As her life energy went up, her mental state was getting more stable.

But there was one side effect.

“Hehe.”

Marie was stuck next to me.

No matter how she presents her white face and blonde hair, she smiled giddily and didn't know how to be apart from me.

‘Despite appearances, she's a 23rd turn veteran?’\*

(TLN: Last chapter said 24th turn and this chapter says 23rd. I doubled checked the raws so it's just a typo by the author. I'm not sure which exam she's actually on.) I couldn't forget the knife skills she showed that sliced my steak in a second.

Then again, she did throw a fork at Odin because she got angry. A normal person would have died then and there.

I stayed at the Nordic exam group headquarters and trained while using the synthetic muscle suit.

I requested a spar with Odin but he gestured to Marie who was next to me.

“If it’s sparring without any weapons, just bare hands, Marie will make a much better opponent than me.”

Only then did I look to the stupid-smiling crazy woman at my side.

Accepting my gaze, Marie opened her blue eyes wide.

I asked.

“Would you like to spar with me?”

“Yeah.”

Marie nodded her head.

“Then you should wear the same suit as well.”

Of the 11 synthetic muscle suits I had stored in my space bag, I took one and handed it to her. But.....

“Uak! What are you doing!”

Right where she stood, she took off her t-shirt and pants!

When I said something, Marie looked at me in her undergarments, tilting her head.

She dons the synthetic muscle suit. Perhaps she got uncomfortable while she was dressing because she barbarically threw off her bra.

In embarrassment, I looked to Odin.

Odin just sighed and shook his head back and forth.

“Let’s fight.”

Marie, having got in the suit, pointed to me and jumped up and down. It looked like she has quickly adjusted to the synthetic muscle suit.

Across from her, I hesitated.

Regardless, my opponent is a thin woman, it's hard to throw a punch.

But.

She lunged forward with a kick and I quickly dodged to the left.

But then with her other leg she kicked into my chest.

Puk!

I blocked with both arms but I'm pushed back a few feet.

But I didn't see her.

All too late I realized that she was flat on the floor and had approached from below me.

Ultimately, the whole time we are sparring, I was busy blocking or escaping.

She not only moved forward, backward, left and right, but adeptly moved up and down as she attacked me.

But thanks to the games of tag with the elves, I was good at dodging.

Eventually, the sparring session basically became a game of tag.

"This is fun."

Marie looked like she was having fun. She was really trying to get me as I dodged here and there.

Despite the physical strength buff intermediate level 5, I became exhausted and I asked Marie, who looked perfectly fine.

"May I ask, what is your physical strength buff level is?"

"Superior level 2."

"Makes sense....."

She may look like she's gone crazy but she was a veteran who had completed 4x more exams than me.

\*\*\*

Cha Ji-hye and I spent all our remaining rest days in Denmark.

The Nordic exam group WAS a safe place and it also had impressive training facilities so it was good for preparing for the next exam.

During that time, the Nordic exam researchers completed the communication device.

Research chief Vilhelm came by with Odin, with the comm devices.

“This is the radio wave transmitter-receiver.”

“This is?”

Width 20 cm, length 14 cm, height 7cm, there were three of them in a small case.

“When you push this red switch, the high power microwave transmits the radio waves, and the area that the radio waves reach is approximately 1,850 km.”

Explained Odin.

“We will have one in the Zelkova village on the Brown Mountain and another in the Wolfenbrooke territory. And the remaining one, you can take it wherever you need to go.”

“And it’s able to make voice calls?”

“Voice calls and text messages are possible. Communicate with these.”

This time, he gave me satellite flip-phone looking comm devices. There are 15 of these comm devices.

“What do you think? Will you be able to take it all in your space bag?”

“I’ll try.”

I tried putting the radio trans-receiver and the comm devices in my space bag.



Thankfully, they all fit.

“I did get them all to fit but I don’t think I’ll be able to take any provisions.”

“Don’t worry about that. If you come to my territory, any amount of provisions and food you need will be given to you.”

“Yes, please and thank you.”

Like that all the preparations were done and the 7th exam approached.

During this time, many things happened.

After the 14 days of treatment were done, Marie’s mental state finally stabilized.

Marie Johanna returned to her original broken-hearted self, the woman who committed suicide, who was originally mentally vulnerable.

For a woman like her to be cursed the way she was, there wasn’t a way for her to not suffer an extreme backlash.

After the treatments were finished and her mind was stable, we weren’t sure if her regressed mental age would recover, but they said she would improve.

But what I was curious about had nothing to do with that.

“Who cursed you?”

When I asked her, Marie answered with an angry face.

“A fair-skinned man did it. But I killed him.”

“Was he a dark magician?”

“Yep.”

“Was killing that dark magician the mission?”

“Yep, yep.”

Marie nodded her head vigorously.

‘It’s definitely that dark magician group.’

A 23rd exam veteran like her, I think she must be nearing the last objective.

If the 23rd exam mission was to kill a dark magician, the center objective of the exams must be closely tied to that dark magic group.

Regardless, I won’t know until I get through the 7th exam.

\*\*\*

“I’ll pray for your safety.”

“Yes, see you in the Arena. Stay strong, Miss Cha Ji-hye.”

“Yes.”

We went into the room prepared for the examinees going into exams.

After chasing out Marie, who tried to follow me in, we lock the door.

The room was nice, made to look like a basic studio.

Unlike the Korean Arena Research Agency that had study room lookalikes, this was much better.

‘It really has been a while.’

Having rested 100 days, it felt like it had been a really long time since the last exam.

But I didn’t feel much anxiety.

Actually, I was looking forward to it.

‘I’ve prepared a lot for this.’

An anti-material sniper rifle AW50F that boasts crazy power.

A synthetic muscle suit that multiplies my strength by 20.

A radio trans-receiver and comm devices.

And also a smartphone and touch pen and a solar charger.

When I send Sylph scouting, I'm thinking of having her take a photo on the smartphone.

I packed the touch pen for Sylph who couldn't use the touch screen on it.

I taught her how to use the smartphone and Sylph learned everything very quickly.

She took photos well and came back and she even used a sketch app to draw with the touch pen. Her drawing abilities were really good. I was pleasantly surprised.

'Whoever Sylph scouts, I'll have her draw in the map.'

The space bag was an intermediate level 1 and enabled storing electronics and it has made it a lot easier.

With a heart full of anticipation, I waited for the 7th exam.

As the rest time counted down, gradually my eyes closed.

When I opened my eyes again, the thing I was so sick of seeing, the white world appeared.

"It is the exam time you have been waiting for!"

Flapping like a sparrow, flying around was the baby angel, welcoming me.

"Yo."

"What is it?"

"Seeing you over and over again, I'm even starting to like you."

The baby angel laughed loudly.

"What makes you spew such nonsense?"

"I suppose. Me spewing such nonsense, I must be in good spirits."

"Wow, you're really motivated."

"Hey, let me ask you one thing."

“Nahh.”

“.....”

Ugh, so aggravating.

My blood pressure instantly rose, I think my forehead vein was bulging.

“You know Marie Johanna?”

“Of course. She’s not mine though.”

“She fought a dark magician in her 23rd exam.”

“So?”

“How come someone like that fought a dark magician in the 23rd exam and I fought that group in the 6th exam?”

“Who knows.”

“If everyone took into account that I would progress fast, there is something you guys want from me?”

“We want you to clear the exams. Are you asking the obvious?”

“No, the flames of life and the space bag too, it’s just that the tools I’ve been given are so good.”

I continued to say.

“If all that is the generosity of the gods, it seems to me that there is something you guys do want from me.”

The baby angel smiled wide.

“All the answers are at the end of the road. If you walk that road you will soon know them, is there a need to be curious now about it?”

“That’s true too.”

Ddak.

The baby angel snapped his fingers.

The exam door appeared.

“Go check it out for yourself. Maybe the answer will pop up while you’re walking.”

“Sure.”

I opened the exam door and walked through. The bright light made everything I saw turn white.

\*\*\*

The Brown Mountain.

I opened my eyes atop the great Tree of Life in the Zelkova village.

I saw young elves, loud and bustling in their game of tag.

Above that, adult male elves were also playing tag, fight-style.

From before, in the battle with the horde of the undead, the elves saw the effects of all their game-of-tag training and were now playing it harder than before.

‘I’ll suit up first.’

I went to a secluded area and put on my synthetic muscle suit.

The safe feeling of it wrapped around my entire body down to my fingers and toes. I already felt as if the energy was flowing through me.

“Board retrieval.”

-Name: Kim Hyun-ho

-Class: 21

-Karma: 0

-Mission: Kill at least one corrupt examinee.

-Time limit: unlimited

I felt as if I’ve been struck in the back of the head.

‘I was so sure that I would get the mission to track down the dark magicians!’

Corrupt examinees!

Like the Chinese examinees, examinees that have given up on clearing the exams and are focused on making money, I would be fighting against them.

‘Why an exam like this.....’

Suddenly, I realized the meaning of this exam.

This isn’t just punishing of examinees that have given up on their duty.

Corrupt examinees gone crazy over making money, for the continuous collection of majeong, are distracting other examinees from clearing their missions.

Eventually, this was to take care of those that are disrupting the exam’s final destination.

‘I have to come across them at some point. But isn’t this a bit much?’

A mere 7th turn examinee like me, it’s usually veterans that go up and fight against corrupt examinees.

I had no idea where to start to look for corrupt examinees.

‘I’ll have to ask Odin. He might know something.’

Most likely, the corrupt examinees have a warehouse where they safely stored the majeong they gather.

Like how the lycanthropes had their ‘human ranch.’

‘First, I have to set up the radio trans-receiver.’

It should be best to set it up in a high spot.

I decided to set one up on top of the Tree of Life.

I jumped with all my might.

Due to the synthetic muscle suit, my body shot up to the sky.

## Chapter 113 – Entering the 7<sup>th</sup> exam (Part 2)

---

For nearly an hour, I was hard at work climbing the Tree of Life.

Even so, I can't see the very top, that's how large it was.

'If it keeps growing like this, won't it get through the atmosphere and into space?'

These are the kind of stupid thoughts going through my head as I set up the radio transmitter.

When I pushed the red switch, the LED lamp lit up.

'Did they say it would work for 2 years?'

The radio transmitter was powered with majeong.

Thanks to using majeong, combined with lots of mana, they said it should easily last around 2 years.

After two years, if the majeong isn't replaced it won't work.

I took out two comm devices from my space bag. I turned on the power button and tried talking.

"Ahh."

-Ahh.

I heard my voice in the other comm device. Maybe because it was close but the sound was very clear.

'First, I'll leave a comm device with the elves.'

I think I'll give it to the eldest elder mother of the three villages on Brown Mountain.

I came down the Tree of Life and immediately went in search of the eldest mother.

Like always, the mothers were gathered at the below the Tree of Life chatting.

"Oh my, Kim, what is it?"



Asked the eldest mother with a very smooth voice unfitting to her age.

“First, take this please.”

I handed a comm device to the eldest mother.

“Huh?”

“What is that?”

“It looks interesting.”

The mothers’ curiosity has been instigated and they gathered like a hive of bees.

I explained to them.

“It turns on when you press the red switch. And underneath is a number keypad.....”

I tried my hardest to explain how to use the comm device.

The eldest mother listened to my explanation and tried using the comm device.

Ring, ring, ring.

The comm device I had vibrated. Even the vibrating was just like a flip phone.

I flipped open the device and answered.

“Can you hear me?”

“Oh my goodness!”

The eldest mother, having heard my voice through the comm device, exploded in exclamations.

For a while, there was a bustling crowd gathering around the comm device. The mothers all wanted to have a go at using it.

After using the comm device with all the mothers, I was finally able to get to the point.

“If you have this, even if I am far away, we can talk to each

other.”

“Are you thinking of leaving?”

“Yes.”

“You can’t!”

“You have to live with us, where are you going to go?”

“That’s right, yes.”

“Is he going to go find a partner?”

“You think so? Then again, in human age, Kim is past the best age for marriage.”

The mothers were boisterous.

Ultimately, it was decided that I am leaving to find a woman to marry. I felt a bit wronged but oh well.

The eldest mother spoke.

“Alright, if you must leave, I cannot stop you. But if you find a partner, do return.”

“Yes. If something happens, do not hesitate to contact me.”

Good.

With this, I could get the aid of the elves in an emergency.

As the news of my departure spread, elves came from the Pine and Thuja Village.

“Kim, thanks to you we have found our safe haven.”

“Thank you so much.”

“I will not forget this kindness.”

“Please come back.”

With consecutive greetings of thanks, they gave me bunches of dried fruit.

With a light step, I left the Brown Mountain.

I don't know the way but using the guider skill, I was able to tell which way Odin was. Where he was located was where Count Wolfenbrooke was.

When I was about out of the Brown Mountain.

Ring, ring, ring.

The comm device started vibrating.

'Huh?'

I picked up the comm device.

-Is this Kim.

A dignified voice.

It was the eldest mother's husband, the greatest elf warrior, Derrick.

"Derrick!"

-I was far away and couldn't see you off.

"That's okay. I'm glad we're able to say goodbye at least this way."

-Yes, this is a very interesting item.

"I am going to leave a comm device with Count Wolfenbrooke as well. If a dangerous situation arises, ask them for aid."

-We will. Thank you for gifting us such a precious treasure.

"Please, it is nothing."

-The kindness you have shown us, if I spent my remaining life repaying you it still would never be enough. So I will make you one promise.

".....?"

-If you need aid, contact me through this. No matter how difficult or dangerous, I will gladly come to your aid.

I felt moved at Derrick's promise.

“Thank you.”

-I will see you again. Honey, how do you turn this off?

-Give it here.

I heard the eldest mother's voice and then the connection was cut off.

I smiled and continued walking.

‘Shall I start speeding up?’

Using the Divine Protection of the Wind, I start to move fast.

As the Divine Protection of the Wind combined with the power of the synthetic muscle fiber, every time I jumped, I dashed forward as much as 20 meters.

For the 50 minutes I could use the Divine Protection of the Wind, I ran like crazy.

When the Divine Protection of the Wind ran out of time and after the 25 minute cool down ended, I ran again.

With that pace, I raced towards Odin.

Occasionally, I saw a village of people, but I didn't bother and I kept going.

I didn't want to uselessly be intertwined with people. It might remind me of trauma of that secluded village of the lycanthropes.

At night, after a full week of traveling, I arrived at Count Wolfenbrooke's territory.

All around was endless green fields.

A flowing river and behind it was a large fortress. Looking at the castle, a western lord in the middle ages would have gawked at this structure.

“Halt!”

Soldiers dressed in armor were guarding the fortress entrance.

I spoke.

“I have come to meet Sir Odin, I mean, Count Wolfenbrooke.”

“The lord?”

The soldiers looked at me with great suspicion.

“If you say I have come from the Brown Mountain, he will know.”

“We will deliver the message.”

One soldier headed inside to relay the message. The other soldiers kept looking me up and down with suspicion.

The wait wasn't all that long.

“Mr. Kim Hyun-ho!”

Odin had come running out.

At the behavior of Odin gladly welcoming me, the soldiers were surprised.

The sovereign ruling them had come out personally to greet me, it's no wonder they were surprised.

“What kind of mission did you get?”

“My mission is a bit of hassle. Let's head inside and we can discuss it.”

“Sure.”

Odin personally showed me to my quarters.

With antique furnishings and silk curtains to decorate, it was a luxurious room.

“This is the VIP room. You can stay here.”

“Thank you.”

“You will need clothes as well. If you wear those clothes around here, it will be suspicious.”

“Probably, huh?”

“I will get you some clothes.”

Odin snapped his fingers. A maid in the hallway came in.

“Call the tailor and bring a simple meal.”

“Yes, my lord.”

The maid respectfully bowed and left.

We sat at the table and talked.

“My mission is to investigate the dark magicians that attacked the Brown Mountain elves.”

“That dark magic organization?”

“Yes. I put people here and there to investigate but still, I think it will take some time.”

“The name of the dark magician that attacked the Brown Mountain is John Omento.”

“John Omento?”

“Yes, but I’m sure getting anywhere with that name will be difficult.”

“Tsk, more than likely.”

Then I suddenly got a good idea.

“Could you get me some pen and paper?”

“Here you go.”

Odin summoned his item backpack and handed me a pencil and paper.

“Sylph.”

-Meow.

Sylph appeared midair and hopped atop my shoulder and started rubbing her face against my cheek.

I pet the cute Sylph and said

“You remember John Omento? The dark magician that attacked me.”

-Meow.

Sylph nodded her head.

I handed Sylph the pencil.

“Could you draw his face on this paper?”

Sylph wrapped her tail around the pencil. Then she hopped down onto the table and started to draw on the paper.

Suk suk suk. Suk suk.

The sound of the pencil echoed through the room. Sylph sketched it surprisingly fast.

“Huh!”

Odin couldn't hide his amazement.

I was amazed too. No matter how many times I see it, it's an impressive skill.

In seconds, the thin middle-aged dark magician, John Omento, was sketched.

I gave the finished picture to Odin.

“The name might not mean anything, but it should help knowing what he looks like?”

“I will copy this picture and spread it far and wide.”

“You can make copies?”

“There is magic. It might look similar but it's different here from the middle ages of Earth.”

“Oh.”

Servants brought us a simple meal. With soft white bread and a warm soup with steam coming up, and wine.

Odin gave the picture to a servant and told him to get the magician to make 100 copies. The servant respectfully took the picture and left.

“You must be comfortable, being a royal.”

I said, watching all this.

Odin laughed.

“Of course it is comfortable. Because I can leave the trivial matters to those below me. Ah, speaking of, would you like to become royalty?”

“Can you do that?”

Odin pat himself on the chest.

“I may look like this but in this world I am a man of great fame and reputation, of the scholar class and a feudal lord. I can give the title of baronet.”

“A baron?”

According to Odin’s explanation, a baron is a rank not of royalty, but a title of nobility.

The amount of small feudal lords under a strong lord is a measure of his title, and although a baronet isn’t a high status, the title does have hereditary transmission.

Even amongst other baronets, depending on who titled you, you are treated differently.

Odin boasts an incredible reputation in the Arena so he says anyone he titles baronet will receive considerable status.

“You could, no matter the country, gain the attention of a king and be titled by him, but then that’s troublesome.”

“Sure. If you would give me a title, I would gladly accept.”

“Then I should tell the magician to make an ID for you as well.”

Above royalty class, to block identify theft, he says it’s crucial to



get a special ID made by a magician.

Odin called the servant again to tell him to get an ID made.

Telling others to do this and that, it sure looked comfortable.

“By the way, did you bring the comm devices?”

“Yes, I set up the radio trans-receiver atop the Tree of Life in the Zelkova Village. At this time, communication with the eldest mother is possible, would you like to try?”

“Alright.”

I handed Odin a comm device.

“The number?”

“I am number 1, the elves are number 2.”

“And I am number 3. Okay.”

Odin punched in the number 2 on the keypad and tried to call.

-Is this Kim?

The eldest mother's voice.

Odin replied.

“It is not. I am the count of Wolfenbrooke, Odin. Kim is number 1.”

-Oh, so that's how you tell the difference.

I explained it to her for a long time but she must have gotten confused.

-Anyway, nice to hear from you. It is nice that we can talk this way.

“Likewise. I look forward to working with you.”

-Us too. But is Kim there?

“Yes, he is next to me.”

Odin handed me the comm device. I exchanged a few sentences

with the eldest mother and then hung up.

Odin looked at the comm device and smiled.

“To be able to use a phone here in this place, it really is convenient.”

“It is.”

I smiled too.

If Cha Ji-hye could find her way here to Wolfenbrooke, I could communicate with her in the Arena too.

Of course, it was only within the radio wave area, but that one radio trans-receiver had a radius of 1850 km coverage, it wouldn't be a problem.

“Anyway, what mission did you get, Mr. Kim Hyun-ho?”

“My mission is a bit of a hassle as well.”

# Chapter 114 – Chase (Part 1)

---

“Corrupt examinees?”

Odin was completely surprised.

“Isn’t it a high level of difficulty for a 7th turn exam?”

At my question, Odin, as if I asked the obvious, agreed.

“Of course it is! Telling a 7th turn examinee to take care of examinees that have at least passed the 15th turn exams? It really is unusual.”

“Maybe it’s not something we are able to measure. The exams.”

“That may be true but tsk, you have been given a dangerous mission.”

“Do you perhaps know where any corrupt examinees like the Chinese examinees are?”

“There is no way to know. Corrupt examinees never divulge the location of their ‘mine.’”

“A mine?”

“It’s slang. It’s what we call the location of where they collect and store their majeong.”

“So I should look for a location that has a lot of monsters with majeong?”

At my question, Odin replied,

“That could be but trash like the Chinese examinees get large amounts of majeong a different way.”

“The method of getting majeong from killing Arena people?”

“Yes. Whether the Arena is small or big, they have majeong on their interior. Since humans are another life form that harnesses mana.”

“Then wouldn’t it work to look for a place that has suffered a large massacre?”

“Well, not really.”

Odin shook his head.

“There is no concept of human rights and public order is precarious in this world. Large massacres are always occurring everywhere.”

“.....”

“In this place, there is a tradition of cremating the dead. Can you guess why?”

“The majeong.”

“Yes. The corpse is cremated and the majeong that is left is sold or used. It was the same in this past war. All those killed in action were cremated and that majeong recovered the cost of the war.”

According to Odin’s explanation, war is created to get majeong or lords who kill prisoners on purpose is a frequent occurrence.

‘This is a crazy world.’

It was another world so I couldn’t just look at it from the point of view of my world but for me, I still felt this all to be very inhumane.

“This is the way the world is here so even if a whole village were to be killed, there is nothing strange about it. It is a world where if you cannot pay the tax, the lords will take your life for it.”

“Ugh. They’ll be really hard to find then.”

“Corrupt examinees know that they themselves are good targets for other examinees. So they move even more carefully within the Arena.”

‘Getting an exam like this out of the blue, this is really complicated.’

Up to the 6th exam, all the exams were connected.

1st was the red apes.

2nd was the retaliation of the angered red rapes.

3rd was running into lycanthropes clan when escaping the forest.

4th and 5th was the elves that the lycanthropes were targeting.

6th was the fight with the elves that got attacked by the undead army.

There was a point of connection between each one.

‘Hold on, there’s no way that I would be given a totally random mission.’

Everything is a hint!

Even though it may seem random, there would definitely be a connection to the last 6th exam.

Figuring out what that connection was would be the guide to how to solve the 7th exam.

‘What could it be? I have to find that connection.’

While I was drowned in thought, Odin suddenly said, “You look to have a lot on your mind. In the interest of changing the mood, would you like to take a tour of the grounds?”

“Oh, sure. We also have to find a place to set up the radio trans-receiver.”

“There is a spot I have in mind. Follow me.”

We go to the top of the mansion and set up the radio trans-receiver atop its steeple.

With the center at Count Wolfenbrooke’s territory, communications will be possible up to 1850 meters.

I was also able to look around Odin’s office.

In the expansive office was Odin’s personal safe.

“Open.”

At Odin’s words, it made a sound and one side of it opened. A small space the size of a study room appeared.

“Wow.”

“Magic is just as useful as science.”

Odin’s personal safe was filled with gold and weapons.

I took out the comm devices and synthetic muscle suits I had kept stored in my space bag.

Odin put them all in the safe and put one of the synthetic muscle suits on himself “Now if I fought Lee Chang-wee I think it’d be doable.”

Even without it, Odin was strong so with his power multiplied by twenty times, his confidence wasn’t misplaced.

A while later, the tailor that Odin called arrived.

The old tailor measured my body here and there and said, “There is a clothing piece that would fit you perfectly, shall I bring it? Or should I make it new?”

“The existing one will be fine.”

“Understood.”

The tailor politely bowed to me and left.

Odin said,

“You will soon become a nobleman so you’ll have to become comfortable with being treated with such respect.”

“Haha, got it.”

“Well, you’ve made a long trip and must be tired, I’ll get you a bath ready.”

“Yes, thank you.”

I returned to my chambers and sat on the side of my bed.

A bit later, two servants and two maids streamed into my room.

The two servants struggled to drag in a large wood bathtub.

The pretty looking two maids politely bowed to me as they said, “We have come on the order to attend to your bath.”

“..... excuse me?”

“Please take off your clothes and come into the bath.”

They just told me to take off my clothes and it flustered me.

I can just picture Odin laughing at this somewhere.

The two servants were respectfully keeping their heads bowed. They were each holding a basket of bath products.

‘Well, doesn’t matter.’

I’ll be a noble soon, so I’ll have to get used to this kind of thing.

“Alright.”

I said as I took off my clothes. I took off the synthetic muscle suit too and got into the wooden tub of warm water.

Only then did the maids raise their heads and come towards me and attend to me.

Maybe it’s just my mood.

I felt like the maids’ eyes were glistening after seeing my body.

‘I’m sure I’m just mistaken.’

Yep.

It’s just my own delusion.

I’m sure it’s also just my own delusional thinking that the maids washing me, their hands keep going to private places.

I used all my might to not get flustered.

Somehow, they looked happy. It looked like they’re almost smiling, I’m sure this was just me overthinking. I’m sure of it.

After the bath, when I stepped out of the tub, the maids dressed me in a prepared silk gown.

The servants came back in and took away the tub and bath items. But the two maids didn't leave and led me to the bed.

"We received another order from our lord."

"May we keep you company?"

Asked the two maids politely.

I hesitated, but only for a moment.

"Um, yes, why don't you."

I didn't really have a reason to refuse.

The maids smiled and got into bed.

Like that, I spent the day relieving the hard fatigue of travel from the Brown Mountain.

\*\*\*

"Did you rest well?"

"Yes, thanks to your many considerations."

"Haha, as you say, I did take extra care on you."

At Odin's mischievous words, I felt embarrassed.

"How are the clothes?"

"They are fine. And more comfortable to move in than I thought."

On top of the synthetic muscle suit, I was wearing the clothes the tailor brought me.

I was wearing a red colored top and bottom, similar in look to a tuxedo, and wrapped in a white scarf with a dark brown cape on the outside.

My shoes are magically light weighted leather boots, my feet



were light and comfortable.

I felt a little burdened because the red was so eye catching but I was told royalty dresses even more flamboyant than this so I held my tongue.

“Have you found the answer to how you will carry out your exam?”

“Yes, there is one thing I’m thinking about.”

Last night when I woke up for a short while, I was deep in thought when I realized what my given hint was.”

“Oh ho, I want to hear.”

“I was thinking that like all the exams before, that this exam was also connected to the one before it.”

“That is true.”

Odin nodded his head and agreed.

“And the corrupt examinees kill monsters to get majeong, but also kill humans to get it.”

“Because humans are easier to kill than monsters.”

“So I was able to come to one conclusion.”

“And what is that?”

I smiled as I say,

“You will have seen it too.”

“I have? Hm, I’m not sure.”

Odin tilted his head.

I said.

“The zombies that were climbing up the cliff.”

“Those crawling zombies? What connection do they have to corrupt examinees...?”

He stopped there, when Odin started to see the big picture his eyes grew big.

I said.

“You said in t Arena, normally, corpses are cremated? Then where did those corpses come from?”

“They are people that have been murdered!”

“Yes, and who killed them?”

“It was the work of the corrupt examinees!”

“That’s it.”

Odin slapped his knees.

“I see. Seeing it like that, there is a connection to that exam and this one!”

“And what I think is that this becomes a hint for your exam.”

“To mine?”

“If the zombies are people that have been murdered by corrupt examinees, we can assume that the corrupt examinees are giving the corpses to the dark magicians.”

“.....!”

“You said so yourself. That there are examinees who purposely distract others from completing the exams.”

“Then, if.....”

“Those dark magicians have a deep connection to the end goal of the exams. The corrupt examinees, in order to halt the clearing of the exams, are cooperating with the dark magicians.”

“I have to return to the Brown Mountain and inspect the remains of the zombies. Seeing what they look like, their clothes, I will have to find out which country, from which area, they come from.”

Odin was thinking things over when he nodded and said.

“Those are some impressive deductions. You, Kim Hyun-ho, are incredible.”

“Not really.”

“Let’s move together. We can do our exams together this time.”

“If I can go around with you, I’ll feel much better for sure.”

That was a special day.

That was the day it was decided I would be going about with Odin, and also the day I became a noble.

The ID the magician made arrived.

The ID was a small rectangle board.

Odin bit his thumb and dropped a drop of blood on the ID.

“I, the count of Wolfenbrooke, Odin, hereby place the title of baron on Hino Kim.”

“Uh, Hino?”

Hino was the nickname that his daughter Bella gave to me.

Odin laughed and says to me,

“Okay, Mr. Hyun-ho, your turn to provide blood.”

“..... okay.”

As Odin did it, I bit my finger and drew blood.

When I dropped the blood onto it, something incredible happened.

“Huh?!”

Odin’s blood and my blood squirmed and moved, then mixed and became words.

Like that, red words appeared on the ID card.

Its words I’ve never seen before in my life but I was able to read

it. It was written in the language of the Arena.

The words written in blood, read as the following.

[Baron Hino Kim]

“What do you think? Simple, no?”

“It really is. So the magic on this ID card responds to two peoples’ blood?”

“Without my blood, it doesn’t react.”

“How so?”

“Our family magician made it so that it only responds to my blood, using magic. This society has strict rules on identity and there are strict measures in place to prevent impersonating royalty.”

I looked at my completed ID with interest.

Magic proves my identity.

With an ID that no one else can take from me, I got that sense of superiority that comes with moving up.

It’s the same feeling when someone rides a supercar to boast their status.

I’m a noble in the Arena now.

# Chapter 115 – Chase (Part 2)

---

While we moved together, Odin and I were a great help to each other.

Odin's current mission was to investigate the dark magicians that attacked the Brown Mountain elves.

The main culprit who facilitated that attack was the middle aged dark magician John Omento.

Then that means that capturing John Omento would be enough to satisfy the requirements of Odin's mission.

I have met John Omento.

But was that all?

I didn't just meet him. I fought for my life against him. He put me in danger by using his weird fog changing technique.

We may not know where John Omento was but what was known was what direction he was in.

The guider skill!

If I have seen the person or object once, this skill would allow me to know which direction it was in.

It's just entry level 1 so I can only tell the general direction but that was enough to track it.

Eventually, thanks to this, Odin would be able to clear his mission.

But what good was that to me?

That I don't need to explain.

What was there to fear when someone as strong as Odin was with me?

When fighting a corrupt examinee, Odin would be a big help.

We were moving together but we didn't rush it.

“For the moment let's rest here. I have to meet the members of the Nordic exam group.”

“Sure, there's no need to rush.”

Both Odin and I have an unlimited exam time, so there was no need to rush.

After that, guests began to come visit the Count of Wolfenbrooke. They were examinees from the Nordic exam group.

They picked up the comm device and synthetic muscle suits and left to commence their exams.

While these many examinees came and left, a month passed.

“My lord, Baroness Johanna has arrived.”

During our meal a maid came and told us quietly. Odin said, “Let her in and prepare another serving.”

“Yes, my lord.”

Baroness Johanna?

‘No way.....’

Exactly.

The beautiful blonde that appeared in the dining hall, saw me and twinkled her blue eyes and raced towards me.

“Hyun-ho!”

It was Marie Johanna.

Pat!

‘Huk!’

In a split second she closed the gap and hugged me.

Reactively, I felt as I've been ambushed. It must be true that she mastered a skill related to assassination.

“Have you been well?”

“Yeah.”

“And you haven’t been hurt?”

“Once. But I’m okay now that I’ve seen you.”

With her twinkling giant eyes, she’s so cute.

The way I treat my spirits, I pet her and gave her a flame of life.

As the flame seeped into her head and Marie became like a cat taking a nap.

“Marie, what is your mission this time?”

Asked Odin.

Marie replied.

“Kill a necromancer at the 5th circle superior rank or higher.”

“Again?”

Odin frowned.

She had the mission to kill a dark magician last time which was how she got cursed.

“That’s good!”

I said and the two turned to look at me.

“There’s John Omento.”

“Right!”

Odin turned his mood around.

“John Omento? Who is that?”

Marie tilted her head.

Odin took out the copied picture of the wanted poster of John Omento from his coat.

“It’s this asshole. He attacked the Brown Mountain with an army of undead so he should be at least a 5th circle.”

Marie stared at the wanted poster sketch and placed it into her coat.

“I think it’ll be good for you to move with us. Odin has to find a dark magician anyway.”

“Yes. Marie, come with us for our missions.”

“Hyun-ho too?”

“Yes.”

“Hehe, I like Hyun-ho.”

Marie looked at me and giggled like an idiot.

..... well, no matter her mental state, she would, no doubt, make a strong ally Even after Marie joined the group. Every now and then members of the Nordic exam group continued to visit, taking comm devices and synthetic muscle suits.

Every day, I made a flame of life and gave one to Marie and gave the other one to the spirits.

Nearly another month passed by.

“My lord!”

Raced in a soldier. A familiar soldier, one that guarded the front gate.

‘So who came this time?’

I didn’t give it much thought.

“What is it?”

“A strange woman is looking for you my lord.”

“A strange woman?”

“Yes, she appears to be a ragged commoner but she insists on meeting you my lord. We tried to chase her away but she is standing her ground.....”

Odin nodded his head.



“Well bring her in.”

“Sir? But she is a suspicious woman, even carrying weapons.....”

“Are those weapons happen to be two curved swords?”

I asked.

The soldier’s eyes went round.

“Oh, how did you know, Baron Kim...”

“It is someone I know so bring her in immediately.”

The soldier looked to Odin. Odin nodded his head.

“Be courteous to her while you bring her in.”

“Yes, sir!”

The soldier raced back out.

Odin laughed as he said,

“Thank goodness that Cha Ji-hye has come as well. It was worth waiting.”

“I agree.”

A bit later, Cha Ji-hye came in, escorted by the soldier.

It’s no wonder the soldiers found her suspicious.

Cha Ji-hye was quite the site.

She must have spent quite a lot of time camping outdoors, her clothes were worn out and the two curved swords at her hilt were very noticeable.

“Nice to see you.”

Cha Ji-hye greeted us with an absent expression.

With a surprised face, Odin asked,

“I heard you were in the south of the continent in the tropical swamps, you got here faster than expected.”

“In the middle, I stole a horse and rode here. On account of being

chased, it was a rigorous voyage.”

At Cha Ji-hye’s bold journey, I felt a sense of preposterousness.  
Was she some sort of outlaw?

Cha Ji-hye continued to say to Odin,

“More importantly, I am in need of clothes and knights armor.”

“.....”

The great Odin was taken aback.

The clothes sure, but requesting it like it was a given, to get a set of knights armor. Just how brazen was she?

Thankfully Cha Ji-hye offered a detailed explanation.

“My mission this exam is to become a renowned knight in the area.”

“Oh, that’s why?”

“I thought of you and immediately came here.”

“That is good. If I give you knight’s armor, you will clear your mission right away.”

“What kind of missions did the rest of you receive?”

I told her about our missions and that we decided to all move together.

Cha Ji-hye pondered this for a moment, then nodded her head.

“I will join as well.”

“You too, miss Cha Ji-hye? Is there such a need? If I give you the armor, you will clear it right away.”

“If I clear it that easily, I’ll probably get a tiny amount of karma.”

Cha Ji-hye continued to say,

“The mission told me to become acknowledge as a great knight. If I move with you all and provide aid, it is possible to clear the exam

with a good score. Also.....”

Cha Ji-hye looked at me.

“I wanted to join with you in the Arena as fast as I could.”

At that, Marie suddenly stuck herself next to me and with a contesting gaze, stared at Cha Ji-hye.

“If you would help us, that is all the better.”

I replied.

Marie didn't seem to like that response of me because she stabbed me in the side with her elbow. What is with this woman?

Odin nodded his head.

“Good. Then we shall journey together. First I'll give you the synthetic muscle suit and comm device. We will rest for a few days and then depart.”

Like that, the four of us became a team.

\*\*\*

We raced on horses and arrived at the Brown Mountain.

When we reached the Zelkova village, the elves welcomed us warmly.

“Kim is back already!”

“Didn't he say he was going to go find a wife?”

“Huh? Look that that, there are two women.”

“He has already got two women?”

“Kim is talented.”

“Then again, Kim is amazing.”

The elves theorized amongst themselves in a chatter. Suddenly the rumor spread that I'm a playboy that managed to find two wives in less than two months.

Marie was stuck to me like glue and seemed like she didn't know how to be apart from me and this ended up making the misunderstanding even worse.

Eventually when I met the mothers.....

“Congratulations on your wedding, Kim.”

“Huh? Oh, no, I'm still a .....

There wasn't even a chance for me to explain.

The eldest mother looked pleased and placed a wooden ring on my finger.

“When I heard you had returned with wives I hastily prepared this. It is a wood ring made from the Tree of Life so regard it preciously.”

“Uh, but.....”

“Ho ho, here, one for each of the wives too.”

Upon hearing the word “wives” Marie quickly received the ring and placed it on her finger and smiled giddily. Okay well this girl is an idiot so whatever.

But Cha Ji-hye also took the wood ring and innocently placed it on her finger as well.

“And just why are YOU taking the ring?”

What's wrong with this one!

“It is difficult to refuse their sincerity. Let's just be married.”

“Since when did you care about this?”

“Mr. Hyun-ho, you are the elves' savior. Being your wife is favorable to me.”

“But then, that makes me a man that married two women in two months!”

“It makes you look capable.”

“Stop saying stuff that doesn’t make sense and.....”

“It would be bothersome to explain.”

Cha Ji-hye brazenly turned her head away and ignored me.

“Kuuk!”

In the midst of all this, Marie was showering me with affection, stuck to my side.

“Hehe, I’m Hyun-ho’s wife.”

“.....”

I just ended up giving up and accepted it. Whatever happens will happen.

After this fuss ended, I explained to the eldest mother why I returned here.

“You want to inspect the zombies?”

“Yes, we are planning on tracking down that dark magician.”

“Shall I call my husband?”

“No, we are just looking is all, so.”

“Well, be careful.”

We left right away.

We headed for the cliff on the southwest side that the zombies climbed up on before.

Due to the zombies being gone now, there were no veteran warriors guarding this place.

“Shall we?”

I jumped down the cliff first.

“Go together!”

Marie chased after me and jumped down.

Odin and Cha Ji-hye followed and started their descent.

“Sylph!”

-Meow.

“Can you catch us before we hit the ground?”

-Meow.

Sylph nodded her head.

“Kyaah!”

Marie looked as if she's enjoy a bungee jump and was giggling.

The gorge at the bottom looked as it did before, blazed.

The fire scorched earth.

It's from when Derrick combined with his Kasa and turned it into a sea of flames.

“It'll be difficult to find a whole zombie.”

Said Odin as he looked around the surroundings.

“Yes but if we search carefully, there should be a trace somewhere. Sylph?”

-Meow?

“Bring zombie corpses to where we are.”

Then Sylph nodded her head and flew off somewhere.

Sylph wandered the gorge speedily and gathered zombie corpses.

There wasn't a single zombie left with arms or legs but there were plenty of small pieces of clothing left even after the fire and some heads.

Marie frowned at the bad smell.

“Let's look.”

We inspected the zombies.

Marie looked at the zombie wreckage and said, “The Aman Empire.”

“Aman Empire?”

I asked quizzically.

Odin nodded his head.

“It is a country in the western of the continent. It is a powerful nation that long ago ruled over the entire continent. Are you sure they are people from Aman empire?”

Marie nodded her head.

Odin said,

“Marie has been to many countries. She would not be wrong.”

“Then we have to go to the Aman Empire.”

A country in the west of the continent.....

It's going to be a long trip.

# Chapter 116 – To the Aman Empire (Part 1)

---

I took out my map to look at where the Aman Empire was it is really was to the far west of the continent.

It looked like it would be a long trip so before leaving, I decided to verify.

If I use the guider skill, that's easy.

“That way is west, right?”

“Yeah.”

Marie nodded her head.

“Then I think it is the Aman Empire. John Omento is in the west too.”

“Lee Chang-wee is also west.”

Added Cha Ji-hye. She must have the guider skill too.

“Then it's for sure. First we'll return to my area and prepare and then leave. The roads to the Aman Empire are well paved so it would be best to use a carriage.”

“Let's do that.”

We said a simple farewell to the Zelkova Village elves and left Brown Mountain.

We rode horses back to Wolfenbrooke and Odin prepared a carriage pulled by four horses.

In the back, we loaded plenty of food and provisions and we started on the road again.

Because the horseman drove the carriage, this trip was very comfortable.

Cha ji-hye and Odin both took out a book from their backpacks and began to read.



Everyone prepared for a hobby in case of boredom. But no one can best me.

“Take out the smartphone.”

Then the smartphone I had stored in my space bag appeared.

Once he saw this, I could see the envy in Odin’s eyes.

“Me to! Me too!”

With eyes glistening, Marie sat right next to me started to whine.

In the end, Marie took the smartphone from me and opened the camera app and started taking selfies with me.

“Hehe, come on.”

Marie showed me the picture she took and the big smiling Marie came out looking very pretty.

“Ho ho, then should we all take a picture together?”

“Yes.”

We gathered on one side and start taking pictures. Considering we’re in the exams, it was a very peaceful time.

But then, after a few days had passed.

We were going along without any issues when we suddenly stopped. A moment later, the horseman called for Odin.

“My lord.”

“What is it?”

“Traveling through the road is forbidden here so I think we’ll have to take a long way around.”

“The national highway is prohibited, has something happened?”

Asked Odin.

“It seems a wyvern has appeared.”

“Wyvurn, in a place like this?”

“Yes, it says a wyvern has set up around this area. Until it is subjugated of, it looks like the road will be closed.”

“Ask how the subjugation situation is going.”

“Yes.”

A bit later, the horseman said,

“They say they are now recruiting the punitive team.”

“Tsk, it’ll be a long while.”

A wyvern is a monster that looks like a lizard with wings, and appears frequently in games or comics as a smaller version of a dragon.

“It will be better to go around the long way.”

“Is a wyvern strong enough for even you to avoid?”

“It’s not that I won’t win if I fight a wyvern but it is a big bother. The things fly so if it starts losing I’ll fly away and repeatedly attack later. It also dropping something heavy like a boulder too.”

According to Odin’s continued explanation, a wyvern is completely covered in scales that are very hard that even an aura attack barely causes an injury to it.

Of course, for an aura master like Odin, there is no need to fear a wyvern but if the wyvern attacked and broke the carriage, it just makes things more complicated.

‘Hm? Hold on. Wouldn’t it be easy to take care of with the anti-material sniper rifle?’

With a 12.7m caliber the anti-material sniper rifle AW50F, this is a golden opportunity to test its power.

I say,

“Let’s just go through. I will get the wyvern.”

“You will?”

“Yes, please leave it to me.”

“Hm, alright. Then I will go and try to tell them.”

Odin gets out of the carriage and says something to the soldiers blocking the road.

The soldiers paying their respects, bent down on one knee, eventually concede and make way for us on the road.

Odin gets back in the carriage.

“I told them I would take care of the wyvern.”

“Your reputation precedes you, Odin.”

“Haha, I feel shy saying it but there isn’t a person on the continent who doesn’t know my name.”

A strong person the whole world recognizes!

Odin’s dignity/prowess is phenomenal.

The carriage continued down the opened road.

“Sylph.”

-Meow?

Sylph is summoned.

“Let me know when the wyvern appears.”

-Meow.

Sylph nods her head and leaves the carriage to scout.

“It can drop a boulder on the carriage so be careful.”

“Yes, I’m planning on getting it before it gets close.”

I’m confident in this.

The power of the bullet that can pierce still, strengthened with the ammo revision/buffer master!

The shooting using sylph and Kasa.

And the monstrous rifle AW50F that uses 12.7mm!

Combining all these things, no matter how hard the wyvern's scales are, I should send it to its grave.

‘But I don't know if I can kill it with one bullet/one blow so first I'll shoot the wings.’

I'll shoot its wings and get rid of its flight ability, then finish it.

The carriage moves ahead carefully.

The horseman steering the carriage is probably really nervous outside.

Like that, we moved for about 4 hours when.

-Meow!

Sylph returned and made a screeching yowl.

‘It's here!’

I open the door and jump out of the racing carriage.

After landing lightly, I shout.

“Weaponized!”

Then,

Pat!

And a 1.35 m long 13.5 kg weighing giant rifle appeared, dignified.

“Sylph, Kasa!”

Sylph of course and Kasa too is summoned and they sit atop my shoulders.

I raised up the AW50F and aim at the sky. With the physical buff intermediate level 5 and the synthetic muscle suit, it's as light as a handgun.

“Sylph, aim please.”

-Meow!

Sylph grabs the muzzle of the gun and moves it to the left.

And then.

“Kyaaak-!!”

With an all-around devilish scream, it rings out everywhere.

‘It’s the wyvern!’

I can see a small dot flying towards us in the sky.

Sylph adjusts the rifle to match the small moving dot.

“We’re going to hit it in the right wing first. Ready?”

-Meow!

-Bark!

My cute spirits answer with might.

Now, the big reveal!

I pull the trigger.

Taaaang—

From where the 12.7mm shoots out, a light.

“Kyaaaaah-!!”

With a ripping scream and the far off dot shakes unstably. There is no doubt that it’s been shot in the right wing.

I pull on the bolt to rid the shell and shout.

“One more shot!”

Taang!!

“Ke aaaaak!!”

Taang! Taaaang-!

I pull the bolt and recharge (?) and consecutively shoot. I keep at the right wing.

Finally, the wyvern quickly descends.

Koong (thud), with that sound I can see a distance away a cloud of

dust.

Then I unsummon my AW50F.

“You got it. Let’s go see.”

“Huh, impressive. Is that an anti-material sniper rifle?”

“Yes, it’s called an AW50F.”

“The wyvern’s coat is stronger than steel. But that you got it, its power is unexplainable!”

“Thanks to my skills, its strength/power is increased.”

Together we run towards where the wyvern fell.

When we race over, the wyvern is bleeding blue blood from one of its wings.

“Kyaaak!”

Although it barely manages to lift its body up, the wyvern roars at us.

“Save your bullets. I’ll finish it off.”

Odin pulls his sword from his belt/hilt.

Paat!

In an instant, the aura blade lights up.

“Ke aaaak!!”

The wyvern must feel the threat because it roars even harder, Odin doesn’t even blink an eye as he heads straight for it.

Kwajik!

The sword empowered with the aura blade, pierces the wyverns head mercilessly.

Koong!

The wyvern’s body falls to its side, its tongue out, it died immediately.

Taking his sword off its head, Odin slices the wyverns belly open.

Then he puts his hand in its belly and pulls something out.

“Take it.”

Odin throws me the majeong, the size of a handball.

“It’s really big.”

“That much, you should get about 400 francs.”

“From just this one?”

I asked surprised.

Odin smiled and said,

“It is the majeong of the most dangerous and hard to capture large species, of course it is worth that much.”

Amazing.

Just now with four bullets, I made 4,400,000,000 won. (I think this is 4.4m USD).

‘Well, I’m teeming with money anyway.’

The reason I haven’t even thought of gathering majeong for money is one.

This majeong doesn’t mean much to me.

I suddenly ask cha ji-hye.

“Do you want it?”

Cha ji-hye recently has been presumed dead and lost everything and is living penniless.

“Okay.”

Without humility (stupid oh no, that’s okay blah blah) and with a chill demeanor, comes towards me.

“Here.”

I toss the majeong to her.

Coming to Denmark, she has got a new identity so she should be able to set up the deposit at the Swiss arena-specialty bank.

“Anyway, you have acquired an impressive weapon. With that, you should be able to kill the average corrupt examinee in one blow.”

“What if the opponent were lee chang-wee?”

“Hm.....”

Odin sincerely ponders it. Then he nods his head.

“There is a chance.”

Not what I expected. That he didn’t say I could win.

“An aura master like me or him, that kind of aura is like a sensory organ so we can sense it within 1 km. in the case of lee chang-wee, it could be even more expansive.”

“But it would be possible if I shot him from beyond that sensory range?”

“I suppose so. If he doesn’t sense your murderous spirit. He doesn’t normally exercise nervousness/tension so there is a chance.”

If so, I could make lee chang-wee the target of my mission in this 7<sup>th</sup> exam.

But then.

Marie quickly takes a knife out of her sleeve and throws it at Odin.

Shweek!

Paat!

Almost at the same time, a blue aura covers Odin’s entire body. The blue aura blocks it and the knife bounces off.

“That.”



Marie stares at Odin, covered in his blue aura.

Odin frowns and glares back at Marie and Marie laughs.

“What is that?”

“From my sensory organ (the aura thing) if something approaches me fast, the aura reflexively creates a protective coat.”

“Something like that is possible?”

“When someone tries to hit someone, their body blocks/flinches in. It’s a reaction similar to that.”

“Then won’t he block my bullet just that same way?”

“I don’t know. A bullet is faster than a knife so I cannot definitely say one way or another. I am not confident I could, but I’m not sure about lee chang-wee.”

Odin shrugs his shoulders.

“ON top of that, lee chang-wee is a beast that has far passed the 40<sup>th</sup> exam. He could also have a couple self-protection magical items. So instead of bearing that danger, it would be best to target a different corrupt examinee.”

“..... I guess I should.”

The AW50F has definitely become stronger but not tough enough for a top ranking examinee like lee chang-wee.

‘From now on I’ll have to focus on leveling up my main skill.’

An aura control in the superior level has created that monster, lee chang-wee, and I get the important of the main skill.

“Let’s get going.”

We get back in the carriage and start again.

Following the royal main road we saw soldiers blocking the road again.

Odin lets them know the wyvern has been taken care of and

declares the wyvern corpse as property of the count of  
Wolfenbrooke.

# Chapter 117 – To the Aman Empire (Part 2)

---

Moving along the royal main road, we could see the border's checkpoint.

The border's checkpoint that the soldiers were guarding had one small door and one large door.

In front of the small door was a long line of people, and the large door was vacant.

Our carriage headed towards the large door.

“Excuse me. Please present your identification.”

Odin opened the carriage door and showed them his identification.

The soldiers looked at the I.D. and looked surprised.

They returned the I.D. and assumed respectful positions.

“It is an honor to meet the great military man of Arend, the count of Wolfenbrooke.”

For reference, this continent is called the Arend Kingdom.

And Odin was one of the strongest people among those in the Arend Kingdom.

The carriage started up again.

Past the border's checkpoint was the neutral zone between the two countries, and the condition of the road became awful and the carriage clunked along.

“Won't this break the carriage?”

“It's got magic spell on it so it won't break from most things.”

“Ah, magic sure makes things easier.”

“Do not look down on this world's civilization. I have heard they even developed the four wheels maneuver height so even racing on

an unpaved road they will maintain evenness.”\*

I was once again awed by the mysteries of magic.

This world reminded me of the Dark Ages of our humanity's history so it was true that I looked down on the civilization in the Arena.

Without human equality and civil rights, it was definitely inferior.

But their skillful use of magic, that I had to give them credit for.

Even what is impossible on earth with science was sometimes possible here with magic.

Even the different entities from various groups on earth that have entered the Arena business are playing to that point.

We passed through the neutral zone and once again arrived at a border checkpoint.

This time it wasn't the Arend kingdom border checkpoint.

It had already been 30 days since we started.

We had finally arrived at the Aman kingdom.

\*\*\*

The Aman kingdom was a nation with a damp tropical climate.

Perhaps that was why everyone's attire was so open and refreshing.

We got to the commercial district, Galen, and we were barely able to navigate through the bustling streets.

‘Wow this is like a beach resort!’

Seeing everyone wearing barely anything, I couldn't hide my surprise.

Of course, the surprise was due to the young ladies.

Walking confidently showing off their skin bronzed by the sun,

in their short dresses and tops barely covering their breasts, my eyes naturally followed them.

“Hyun-ho!”

“Huh?”

Marie called my name and I finally peeled my eyes away from the women on the streets.

With hurt eyes, Marie stared at me.

“Um, what?”

“You’re bad.”

“What do you mean?”

“Bad.”

“I think you have misunderstood, I am not a bad guy.”

Rather, a bit of a pushover actually.

Marie looked sullen and she opened the door and jumped out the carriage.

“Huh? Where are you going?!”

“Leave her be. She’ll find us soon enough.”

Odin stopped me.

‘I really can’t get a read on her.’

A crazy girl is definitely hard to deal with. My baby sister Hyun-ji is the best representation of that.

The city of Galen is the first city once you passed the border checkpoint.

I was told it was busy year-round with traveling brokers, businessmen, and vacationers.

Because of that there were lots of various hotels at different price points.

There were cheap boarding houses for mercenaries/hired soldiers and travelers, and for well to do merchants there were luxury inns and top of the line hotels for nobles.

We, of course, headed to the noblemen's hotel.

Befitting of a hotel used solely by nobles, it was large and luxurious.

There was a place to park carriages and separate lodgings for the servants as well.

"I have lots of money so there is no need to be frugal. We will each get a room."

Everyone agreed with Odin. Odin paid the money, including the room for the absent Marie, for 4 rooms.

A fat middle-aged man who looked to be the inn owner gave us each a wooden tag.

On the wooden tag was a number, mine said 401.

"These are your room keys. It opens and closes with magic."

"Incredible."

It might look very analog but this was comparable to our world's key cards.

We headed into our rooms.

I put down my luggage in room 401 and looked around the room.

"Whew, I can properly rest here."

Properly stretching my arms and legs and lying down on a bed, the exhaustion finally started to seep in.

All that time spent crunched into the carriage was uncomfortable. It did beat sleeping on the floor though.

But then.

"Hyun-ho!"

“Uack!”

At the sudden voice I shouted in surprise and bolted up.

..... Marie was hanging on the window outside.

From an inside pocket she took out what looked like a pin set and she instantly broke through the locked window.

Chul kuk!

The window opened in a few seconds.

“What do you think?”

Having come inside, Marie spun around.

“Hul.....”

I didn’t even realize I made the sound.

She was wearing exactly what the women of Aman were wearing.

A short skirt and a shirt that’s basically just a bra.

Every time she spun around, the skirt moved up and down showing peeks of white panties. With her glowing pale skin, it made me dizzy.

“Um, what about your synthetic muscle suit?”

“I put it away.”

“Why?”

Marie tilted her head to the side.

“But the only person that can retrieve electronics without breaking them is me.”

Then Marie was surprised and summoned her item bag and took out the synthetic muscle suit.

She took off her clothes down to her undergarments and she frantically put on the synthetic muscle suit.

Don’t change in front of me!

.... Although, thanks.

She moved her body this way and that way and Marie let out a sigh of relief.

“It’s not broken.”

“Thank goodness.”

Thankfully, the synthetic muscle suit didn’t break and looked to be working properly.

‘As long as it doesn’t go through the exam door, it looks like it won’t break.’

But without me, when we return to our world, we will have to store the synthetic muscle suits and radios somewhere here in the Arena.

I took out my radio and called Odin.

On our way over, we placed the transmission receiver somewhere discrete and transmissions worked here too.

-I already made such arrangements before the exam.

“Oh? Really?”

-Of course. It is expensive equipment we finally got into the Arena, we cannot have them break.

But of course.

No way the Nordic exam group would be careless.

-As long as Marie was careful, there won’t be an examinee who will screw up.

“..... Sounds right.”

Marie must have been feeling shy, she was giggling. She eventually gave up the Aman attire and returned to her normal fashion.

\*\*\*



We lived in the hotel for a while as we gathered data.

Truthfully, Marie investigated the area very quickly, gathering rumors.

All we did was go around to pubs and listened in on drunken conversations.

I was able to put Sylph to very good use here.

“Look around and words like massacre, slaughter, wipe out, death en masse, and annihilate, and deliver those conversations to me.”

After reaching intermediate level 2, Sylph’s recon distance had increased to 3 km.

Sylph allowed me to listen to any conversations with those key words within a 3 km distance.

Pubs and restaurants, the chatter and stories were relayed clearly to my ears.

Amongst those, I wrote the useful information as memos on my phone.

Thanks to the guider skill, I could chase after John Omento or Lee Chang-wee but the reason we were gathering data this way was to be cautious.

‘It wouldn’t be good to just barge into the ultimate boss room.’

A fortnight passed and we were able to determine our final destination.

“The Deport area seems most plausible. The rumors coming in from there are all about how chaotic it is.”

“Yes.”

Marie, who was cuddling my back, agreed.

The Deport area was to the west of Aman, a region that hugged the coast.

John Omento was also to the west.

In the western region, I picked an area with the worst rumors and that was the Deport area.

“Lee Chang-wee is also in that direction.”

Added Cha Ji-hye.

Odin nodded his head too.

“Then it is definitely there. We will set out tomorrow. Lee Chang-wee will be there too, we must be careful.”

In order to be discrete, we decided to leave our carriage here and make the trip there and back on horseback.

We got three horses and set out.

Odin and Cha Ji-hye each rode a horse, and I rode one with Marie behind me, who had become like a piece of gum that wouldn't come off.

\*\*\*

Deport was a coastal area in western Aman, and the Deport port and its namesake was due that that.

The Deport port had an abundant fishing industry and an abundance of seafood that were so rare and precious that you could lay them at a sultan's feet.

The only downside was there were lots of pirates who wreaked havoc.

The Aman Empire's public order weakened and, using that opportunity, the pirates grew strong in that interim and they took control of the entire western coast of the continent.

It was a given that they attacked the ports on the coast but now they were brazen enough to penetrate deeper inland to attack and plunder more places.

Aman tried and failed many times to eradicate the pirates.

That was because even though they boasted the largest army in the world, the Aman Empire had a laughably weak naval presence.

“Like always, they are obsessed with taking over all the land so they just focus on training the army only.”

Said Odin.

“They want to repossess the glory they once had when they owned the entire continent. If it were me, I would make peace with my neighboring countries and restore national public order and focus my energy on getting rid of the pirates to restore safety.”

“Even so, these pirates are extremely strong. It sounds like it’s not just the Aman Empire but all the nations with ports on the western coast who are having a hard time with them.”

“Well, the reason they can’t eradicate them is obvious.”

“The royalty is probably making money off the pirates.”

Said Cha Ji-hye.

Odin nodded his head.

“That’s it. The pirates have backdoor relations with the nobles, delivering them precious treasures. The nobles work to prevent the eradication of the pirates or give them information to avoid danger.”

‘Rotten.’

Even a democracy like Korea has corruption, so how would it be in the Arena’s barbarous system?

I thought it over then said,

“Do you think the leader of this pirate power is a corrupt examinee?”

“I am thinking that too. Even if not, I am sure he/she is conspiring with the pirate power.”

Let’s collect all this info.

1. Corrupt examinees
2. Black magic organization
3. Pirate power
4. The rotten nobles that back them

This was an atrocious criminal cartel alliance.

With this much, it's not just a worry for the Aman Empire but the entire Arena world.

There are even so many monsters that make living difficult and to add on top of it all, humans were quarreling like this!

I felt pity for the people living in the Arena that had to suffer through this hell.

'It might be that the final mission is to restore this rotten world.'

After many days passed since leaving the city of Galen.

We finally arrived at Deport.

# Chapter 118 – Clear (Part 1)

---

The Deport port was a shit show from the beginning.

Why?

Look over there.

Here and there fires were raging and people were screaming while running away crying.

“It’s the pirates!”

“Run!”

“Kyaaak!”

Complete pandemonium.

People were packing up everything and escaping the port.

The chaos was as if there was a war.

“I think the pirates have infiltrated.”

“Yes, looks like it.”

“So then there should be some corrupt examinees there?”

“Yes, most likely.”

If I were a corrupt examinee, I wouldn’t lose out on such an opportunity.

This was a golden chance to kill indiscriminately and gather majeong. I don’t think they would miss out on such an event.

“Corrupt examinees are usually veterans so they’re strong, be wary.”

Said Cha Ji-hye.

“First, let’s not fight the pirates. We’ll stay low and watch the situation and we have to eliminate anyone we suspect to be a corrupt examinee in one go.”

We all agreed to that.

I looked around and discovered a hill where I could look down onto the Deport port.

“I will be over there.”

“That will be good. We will penetrate into the city.”

“Yes.”

I separated from the group and headed for the hill.

“Divine Protection of the Wind!”

I then started making my way up the hill.

With the powers of the synthetic muscle suit on top of my muscle power, in one jump I’m covering several meters.

With a few easy jumps, I arrived at the hilltop.

The birds that were on the tree at the hilltop became alarmed and fluttered away.

It’s not that high of a hilltop so I wasn’t able to see the complete entirety of the port but I thought it should be good enough of an angle for sniping.

‘Well, Sylph can do the aiming and shooting.’

“Weaponize.”

The AW50F appeared in my hand.

I got some rocks and branches and stacked them to make some cover.

I hid my body behind it and pushed my muzzle through a crack.

Using the scope attached to the AW50F I looked down at the inside of the harbor.

The pirates were plundering.

Guys with weapons pushed down the doors and entered a private home and dragged out an older woman.

They conversed amongst themselves and laughed and without restraint swung a sword at her neck. The poor woman was overcome with fright when her neck was cut.

The bastards brutally sliced her stomach open and harvested the majeong.

‘Those sons of bitches!’

I felt the only way to resolve the situation was for me to immediately shoot them all in the head. But I held in my anger and continued looking around the harbor.

‘I have to find the corrupt examinees first.’

If I shot them now, it’ll ruin that.

Even if I used Sylph to eliminate the sound of the gunshot, the sound of the bullet piercing through the air would still be audible.

If the pirates fall to some unknown long-distance attack, the corrupt examinees will know that it’s from a gun.

The examinees would start catching on to the threat and become vigilant.

‘First and foremost, we have to get rid of the corrupt examinees. I have to find the bastards first.’

It won’t be too late to take care of the other small fish later.

The problem was that I didn’t know which of those pirates were corrupt examinees.

‘What do I do?’

I was pondering that when.

Suddenly I received a transmission on my radio and I took the call. It was showing Cha Ji-hye’s radio number.

-Mr. Kim Hyun-ho.

“Yes, go ahead.”

-I have a plan.

I'm glad to hear that.

I was just thinking that this won't work and we needed a special plan.

-If we assume that there are corrupt examinees amongst the pirates, there is an advantage to us over them.

“What is that?”

-These radios.

“Ah!”

-Even without the radios, you can use Sylph to send us messages. The fact that we have a clear line of communication is strategically very advantageous.

“You want to fight systematically by using that?”

-Yes.

Cha Ji-hye began explaining her strategy.

-First, the strongest one of us, Odin, would take the front and take care of the pirates. The corrupt examinees would move in order to attack Odin.

“I suppose so. They might even recognize Odin's face.”

-Yes. You will keep using Sylph to listen in to their conversations and when you hear the words 'examinee' or 'Odin' then you shoot those pirates.

‘Ah!’

A clear plan.

-Corrupt examinees put safety first and don't move alone. If one gets shot, the others will immediately hide to avoid being shot.

“Yes.”

-At that time, Kim Hyun-ho, you will use the radio or Sylph to



tell me where they are hidden. I will use a stealth attack and finish them off or I will lead them to an area where you can shoot them  
“Sounds good. What about Marie?”

-She will secretly protect Odin who will be out in the open and in danger.

Everything fit perfectly.

It was a militaristic strategy very becoming of the soldier Cha Ji-hye.

“Understood.”

-Then we shall start now. First, Odin will appear at the harbor center square and draw the attention of the pirates.

“Okay!”

After finishing the call, I gave the order to Sylph.

“Sylph, from now on when you hear ‘examinee’ or ‘Odin’ aim for that pirate.”

-Meow!

Sylph immediately flew down to the harbor. She was flying high in the sky and no one could see her.

Odin’s fight began.

Odin had appeared in the Deport center square, and drew his long sword.

Pirates attacked him from all sides but Odin quickly swung left and right and chopped off two heads.

Like cutting weeds with a scythe, Odin killed two people easily and instantly, the surrounding pirates focused all their attention on him.

Pirates ran at him from all directions.

They attacked with not just swords and knives but spears and axes too, all manner of interesting weapons, but Odin didn’t blink

an eye.

Chwa chwa chwa ak—

The blue aura rode up his sword in a haze, creating a blue line around itself.

The bodies of five pirates got cut up. Blood spewed out everywhere from the obliterated bodies.

As the pirates were stricken with fear and started to hesitate, Odin dove straight into their ranks.

Like a lion jumping into a herd of sheep, Odin rushed in without restraint.

Odin deliberately didn't use his aura blade. He fought using only small bits of aura.

Because of that, the pirates believed they had strength in numbers and continued to jump into the fight.

When the pirates gathered like a fleet of ants, Odin finally showed his true colors.

The aura blade exploded.

The pirates were frozen in shock.

Odin relentlessly ran towards them. The ants that gathered round without fear, he showed them his true power.

Like leaves falling in autumn, it's was a splatter film!

Now, the brutal pirates looked like they had come back from hell.

The bodies of men were sliced up like soft tofu.

Odin swung his sword and any pirate that came into contact with his blade was turned into bits.

The pirates screamed and began to scatter.

The appearance of an aura master!

They now realized that even if they died a hundred times over

and started again, they would never be able to beat this foe.

Odin, not wanting to lose a single one, enthusiastically ran around the square and murdered the pirates.

Odin, who was on the left, instantly appeared on the right.

The whole square was taken care of quickly.

All the pirates were either dead or had run away.

Like people fleeing a warzone, the pirates too frantically ran away from Odin.

Odin chased after these pirates.

Odin himself was a single-sword wielding large killing machine.

‘Truly incredible.’

I had already seen him eliminate zombies in one go but seeing it again I couldn’t help but be floored.

Overwhelming power.

What a truly strong person is, he was showing it.

But then.

-Meow!

Sylph appeared next to me in a moment and shouted.

‘They’ve revealed themselves! The corrupt examinees!’

I immediately prepared to fire the AW50F.

Sylph moved the barrel of the rifle to the western area for me.

“Kasa!”

-Bark!

Kasa appeared.

“Get ready!”

Sylph and Kasa got on both my shoulders. I looked at the target through the scope ‘A Chinese!’

Black hair, a young Asian man. The other men were all Asians too.

I was chasing John Omento together with Lee Chang-wee with the guider skill to get here, so assessing the situation, I was sure those corrupt examinees were Chinese.

I pulled the trigger.

Pew shoook!!

Sylph took care of the gunshot but the sound of the bullet ripping through the air alone was loud.

Using the round lens of the scope, I could see my opponents head explode.

“Another one!”

The gun was instantly reloaded and I pulled the trigger one more time.

When a comrade’s head bursts all of a sudden, the other corrupt examinees were flustered.

But thanks to them not having received military training, they realized late that they were being sniped.

I took another shot.

Shoook-!!

The bullet landed on another man’s neck.

Surprisingly, blood exploded from his neck.

There wasn’t even a remnant of a neck left, the head separated from the body and floated in the air.

‘Good!’

The other two people now finally hid behind a building.

I took out the radio and called Cha Ji-hye.

-Yes.

“On the western side two of them are hiding. Both are male, looking at the hair and skin, there’s no doubt they’re Chinese.”

-Exactly where on the western side?

“Follow the big road from the square, go west and you’ll see them.”

-Understood.

I gave an order to Sylph.

“Go tell Cha Ji-hye the exact direction and distance.”

Sylph nodded her head and shot off like a bullet towards the harbor.

A moment later, Sylph returned.

“Did you tell her?”

-Meow.

Sylph nodded her head.

I once again put my eye to the scope and scouted the two corrupt examinees that were hiding.

I could see Cha Ji-hye approaching the building.

I left the trigger to Sylph.

“When you see the men, shoot them no matter what. Whether a hand or foot or any part of their body is revealed, shoot it.”

-Meow.

Sylph replaced me and grabbed the trigger.

I continued to look through the scope.

Cha Ji-hye went around the back of the building and took out her double swords.

After threatening them, she cleverly moved to the back of the building to lure them out into the open.

The right arm of the corrupt examinee trying to counterattack her was revealed.

Sylph immediately pulled the trigger.

Travelling faster than the speed of sound, the 50BMG bullet obliterated the arm that was swinging the sword.

The right arm fell off at the elbow.

The hand gripping the sword fell to the ground and rolled and twitched.

Cha Ji-hye couldn't easily attack the men hiding behind the building.

She did succeed in ambushing them and one of them has lost the right arm he used for his sword but she was now only a 7th turn examinee. It was not enough to tackle two corrupt examinees.

‘Huh? Hold on.....’

The AW50F is an anti-material sniper rifle.

A weapon used to pierce a tank to kill the enemy.

On top of that the master level ammo revision skill and spirit summons.....

‘Can't I pierce through the building to shoot them?’

I talked to Sylph.

“Shoot them. It doesn't matter if they are under cover.”

-Meow.

With her long tail, Sylph adjusted the shooting direction and, with a cute front paw, pulled the trigger.

## Chapter 119 – Clear (Part 2)

---

Sylph consecutively pulled the trigger.

The speed with which she reloaded was so fast it didn't look like shooting but indiscriminate spraying.

The flying bullets pierced through the building. As expected, it was powerful.

Chul kuk chul kuk!

When all the bullets got used, the reload skill activated, and the empty magazine automatically refilled. And then, after another three bullets, Sylph stopped shooting.

The bodies of the enemy were behind the building so I couldn't see them, but through the scope, I saw Cha Ji-hye giving me the okay sign.

It means all the enemies have been killed.

‘But wait, why isn't the exam door appearing?’

I eliminated four corrupt examinees so the exam was cleared and the door should appear.

“Board retrieval.”

I checked it out myself.

-Name: Kim Hyun-ho

-Class: 21

-Karma: +14,400

-Mission: Eliminate at least one corrupt examinee. (Complete) -  
Time limit: Unlimited

-You have cleared the mission. To finish the mission, say ‘exam door.’

-You may receive your karma prize during the mission.

‘Finished!’

Those four were corrupt examinees.

The deal for clearing the mission was to kill at least one corrupt examinee and the time was unlimited.

Thus, if I want, I can kill more corrupt examinees.

‘So, if I call for the exam door, I can leave whenever I want. This is pretty nice.’

If it became dangerous, I could run through the exam door.

More than anything I was happy about the karma!

The karma I got from killing four examinees was over 10,000. It is a quantity only got from clearing three missions.

‘I’ll hunt some more.’

I got a tingly feeling as if I’ve won the lottery.

If I just do well, I can mass murder corrupt examinees and become incredibly strong.

‘I have to help Marie and Odin anyway.’

I decide to stay in the Arena a while longer.

Regrettably, the pirates have started their retreat. It’s because the number killed by Odin numbered over 100.

‘I want to hunt a bit more though.’

I hoped for more corrupt examinees to be caught in the fray.

Then.

-Meow!

Sylph wrapped her tail around the barrel and moved it to the right.

“Found another?”

-Meow.



Sylph nodded her head.

Through the scope, I checked out what Sylph was aiming at and I really did see someone who looked like a corrupt examinee.

Their hair and eyebrows were dyed brown but their skin color was definitely Asian. There was even another Asian next to them.

‘I’m sure of it.’

Another two, what a good opportunity.

I immediately pulled the trigger.

Shook-!

The bullet strongly ripped through the air.

But before the bullet reached the examinee’s head, it hit something else. Some kind of transparent shield appeared to have broken.

‘Is it magic?’

Probably defensive magic. The opponent seemed to have magic as their main skill.

The targeted corrupt examinee was taken by surprise and looked all around.

He doesn’t seem to realize yet where the attack came from and what kind of attack it even was. There was no gunshot that could be heard so there was no way to really know that you were being shot at.

‘Another shot!’

I reloaded and pulled the trigger again.

The corrupt examinee looked like he was chanting something and once again the bullet was blocked by defense magic.

I reloaded and shot faster than the last time.

In a cold sweat, the corrupt examinee chanted again.

But this time I was faster.

The incredibly powerful 50BMG bullet that could pierce through buildings, completely shattered the entirety of the corrupt examinees skull.

The headless corpse collapsed to the floor.

The comrade standing next to him now realized he was sniped and hid behind a nearby large tree.

‘Really, a tree?’

I had Sylph aim at the tree, then pulled the trigger.

Shook!

The bullet went through the tree and hit the hiding corrupt examinee in the neck.

But perhaps because the power was hindered while going through the tree trunk, the target’s neck didn’t completely fly off.

The corrupt examinee blocked the blood gushing from his neck and with a shaking hand, took out a healing potion from his pocket.

‘No can do.

I shot again.

When he was about to pour the healing potion on his neck, the 50BMG bullet shattered their head entirely, without a trace.

The healing potion poured over a neck with no head.

‘The 6<sup>th</sup> one!’

I feel delighted.

I summoned my board again and checked my karma.

-Name: Kim Hyun-ho

-Class: 21

-Karma: +17,900

-Mission: eliminate at least one corrupt examinee. (Complete) -  
Time Limit: unlimited

-You have cleared the mission. To finish the mission, say 'exam door.'

-You may retrieve your karma prize during the mission.

“Hahaha!”

Laughter just erupted from me. I'm raking in karma.

As the pirates started running away on their ships, the fight was over.

‘What a pity.’

In a mission where I needed to kill at least one, I killed 6. An excessive achievement! Karma that would take two months to accrue, I got in a day. What a huge success.

Even so, there was no end to human greed and I felt bummed.

Through the radio, I contacted Odin.

-The fight seems to be over, how did you do Kim Hyun-ho?

“I eliminated six.”

-Six?

Odin was surprised.

“Yes, thanks to you.”

-Well, miss Cha Ji-hye's plan was good. Anyway, congratulations, you must have gotten lots of karma?

“Yes, and I cleared the mission.”

I added that I will not return home and will stay with everyone until everyone has cleared their missions.

-Well, now we know that the pirates and corrupt examinees conspiring together, what shall we do now? Shouldn't we track

down the black magician John Omento?

I paused for a moment in thought.

“No. Let’s stay here for a little bit.”

-Why do you say that?

“Think about it. If the corrupt examinees and pirates are working with the black magicians. What do the black magicians want?”

-.....corpses?

“Yes, and even though the pirates lost, there are a lot of corpses created from this.”

-You mean to say that the black magicians will come to gather the corpses.

“Yes. You said in Arena, it is common that corpses are cremated?”

-Yes.

“So, then someone could say they did cremate a body but steal the body instead?”

-I suppose one could. But funerals for victims of disasters like this, they usually fall under supervision of the rulers of the respective district.

The Aman empire doesn’t have a lord, rulers appointed by the sultan rule the district during their terms.

“Didn’t you say the royalty watch the backs of the pirates?”

-Ah! Yes. Now that I look at it, this attack too was oddly absent of any military interference.

“If we stay here for a while, even if it’s not John Omento, I think we’ll be able to find a black magician.”

-Sounds good. Then we shall stay here and watch and see how they take care of their victims’ corpses.

“Sounds good.”

I finished the call and I headed to the port to join the rest of the gang.

\*\*\*

“Oh oh! That famous excellency, the count of Wolfenbrooke!”

An emaciated bald old man was all excited and was kissing Odin’s ass.

With a small and thin frame and all manner of colorful clothes and shiny accessories hanging off him, he looked suspicious like a pseudo-religious sect leader.

“Due to the state of things, my introduction is late. I am the consul of this Deport harbor for five years, Sil Odsel.”

“Why is your defense setup so weak? Not only that but where has the regular army gone that your port is helpless when they it is invaded by pirates?”

Odin asked interrogatingly.

Consul Odsel sighed purposefully with regret.

“Oh yes, yes, those treacherous people used the chance to attack while we were off dealing with a monster near our area.”

“..... is that so? How unlucky.”

“It was indeed.”

Consul Odsel made a face of despair.

But we could assume he was in cahoots with the pirates. Because he couldn’t act for shit.

“Now now, let’s not talk about that, I will attend to you so shall we head together to the official residence?”

Odin shook his head.

“I will only be resting here momentarily, there will be no need

for that.”

“Aigoo, even if it’s only for a little while, you are the savior who saved our port, how could we neglect to care for you?”

“It is fine, our two countries are not on good terms and you have a lot of work to do, I will leave you to it.”

“Ah well, if that is what you insist I cannot go against it. Oh, but I feel so apologetic....”

Like that we parted ways with consul Odsel and headed to the inn we already had booked.

It hasn’t even been half a day since the whole fiasco but the inn owner has already opened for business, the owner is incredibly courageous.

Thankfully, the food wasn’t plundered and we were able to have a meal.

During the meal, Odin said,

“They are working with the pirates.”

“Yes, even at a quick glance, it seems so. And it is suspicious that he said they couldn’t protect the harbor because they were coincidentally off fighting some monster.”

I agreed with them.

Outside, at the order of the late-arriving Consul Odsel, the corpses were being gathered.

The soldiers that arrived after it all when they should have been fighting pirates were now just gathering bodies, it was so pitiful to look at.

Currently, I was using Sylph to track where they were gathering and taking the bodies to.

Then Cha Ji-hye had an idea.

“Can’t we use the same method we used before to differentiate

the corrupt examinees from others?”

“How do you mean?”

“By looking for people who use the words ‘undead’ or ‘zombie.’ In this chaos, the only ones to use those words would only be black magicians.”

I stared blankly at Cha Ji-hye.

“Is something wrong?”

“No, you’re just really smart.”

“Thank you.”

Without being humble and just accepting the compliment was very Cha Ji-hye.

Just banging out good ideas like that, a very useful co-worker.

Going with her idea, I gave the task to Sylph.

Not even 10 minutes had passed when Sylph returned and pointed to the west.

“You found them already?”

-Meow.

Sylph nodded her head.

“Can you let me hear their conversation?”

-Meow.

Sylph used her power and a gentle breeze passed by my ear.

Then I could start to hear a conversation of young men as if they were sitting right next to me.

-Hurry and gather the soul fragments. If we don’t gather enough on our return, the master will turn us into the undead too.

-Damn it, if the Brown Mountain job had succeeded we would have gathered plenty soul fragments.

‘These bastards!’

I handed the smartphone and touch pen to Sylph.

“Can you take a picture of them?”

-Meow.

Sylph took the smartphone and touch pen and quickly flew away.

“If they’re talking about the Brown Mountain, they are the black magicians for sure.”

Marie, who had been listening in with me, clenched her hands into fists.

“Should I go kill them?”

Asked Marie, opening her large blue eyes at me. Saying such savage words with such a pretty face.

I shook my head.

“Based on how they’re talking, these guys aren’t the big shots.”

Marie’s mission was to ‘eliminate a superior necromancer above the fifth circle.’

Listening to this conversation, it as easy to conclude that they were small fish.

‘The master they are referring to must be the big boss.’

And the words ‘soul fragments’ were significant.

Listening to this, their goal was not corpses to turn into undead, but fragments of souls.



# Chapter 120 – Objective (Part 1)

---

[If the Brown Mountain job had succeeded we would have gathered plenty of soul fragments.]

That means the objective of having attacked the Brown Mountain was to gather soul fragments.

‘No, elves from various points across the continent were being attacked, primarily for those soul fragments.’

Let’s lay this all out.

1. An unknown dark magic organization was gathering soul fragments.

2. The soul fragments were most likely a means to their ultimate objective.

3. Stealing corpses to create an army of the undead was just a means for them to gather soul fragments.

I’ve organized it to the best of my ability and I told the others my thoughts.

“Soul fragments, you say..... so that is what those bastards are really after.”

“They must be trying to do something with those soul fragments. Even though we don’t know what that something is.”

Then, Cha Ji-hye opened her mouth.

“The soul fragments, I think it is something that can be gathered from the dead.”

“Obviously. Since they are using this time to gather the soul fragments from the people killed by the pirates.”

Right on time, Sylph returned. She shows me the photo she took on the camera phone.

The two young men were dressed in soldier clothes.

They were going around gathering soul fragments while masquerading as soldiers “Think its good idea to capture and torture them?”

“I think that’s best.”

We got up from our seats.

As we followed Sylph, the two men we saw in the picture appeared.

At first glance, they looked like they’re inspecting the bodies but upon further inspection, we could see them put their hands together like they were praying and then started reciting a spell.

As they did so, a white light similar to a firefly, escaped from the corpse and landed in their hands.

They took that scrap of light carefully into a pouch with an interesting design on it.

“I will go drag them over.”

Odin stepped up.

He slammed his foot against the ground and nearly teleported next to the two men.

Without a chance for the two men to even be surprised, Odin knocked them out with his hands to the backs of their necks.

And he just lifted one in each hand and brought them over.

“Let’s go somewhere quiet!”

“Yes.”

We dragged the two fainted men and ran to a dark and remote alleyway.

When we got to a quiet location, we woke the two men.

“Huk!”

“What, what it this!”

The two men looked at us while shaking in fear.

Odin said to them.

“What are you planning to do with the soul fragments?”

“How, how do you? Who are you guys?”

At our mention of the soul fragments, both guys were surprised.

“We already know you’re both dark magicians. Starting now, if you don’t answer my questions, I’m going to smash a finger under my foot one by one.”

Odin’s threats made even me shudder.

“You, who are you!”

“I am the Count of Wolfenbrooke, Odin.”

“Wo-, Wolfenbrooke?”

“The Aura Master of Arend.....”

The two men went blank.

This is how renowned Odin was in the Arena.

Odin smiled wryly.

“Even if your master came for you, you two cannot escape my hands.”

“Are, um, you really the count of Wolfenbrooke?”

“Yea, that’s right, I did hear the count of Wolfenbrooke appeared and drove away the pirates but.....”

The two believed Odin and were now stricken with fear.

“Now then, the first question. Why are you are collecting soul fragments? What is your objective?”

“That, um.....!”

The two men were flustered.

“I warned you what will happen if you don’t answer.”

“Heek!”

“But that.....”

Frightened, the two men clenched their hands.

Odin took one of the men’s hands and forced him to lay it flat on the floor.

Implying he’ll stomp on it any second now.

“Ack! Hold, hold on! I’ll say! I’ll tell you!”

Screamed the man with his hand on the ground. Thankfully, these two were easily scared.

“Soul, um, soul fragments are an absolutely necessary important ingredient for superior level necromancy magic.”

They began spilling everything.

“There are two ways to make the undead, taking just a dead body and breathing dark magic into it, it can only carry out simple physical instructions, that’s the simplest necromancy.”

“A zombie.”

“Um, yes. But if you clump soul fragments together and breathe a fake soul into a body, it resembles the person it used to be.”

“They want to revive someone.”

Said Cha Ji-hye.

Odin interrogated them more.

“Who are you trying to resurrect?”

“That I don’t know.”

“You still don’t realize your situation.”

Odin once again forced the man’s hand to the ground. The man threw a fit like he was going to faint and screamed.

“Ack! It’s the truth! Who the superior authority wants to resurrect is only known to very few people!

“If that is all you know, I can only express my condolences for your fates.”

“Hold on, wait! I know one thing for sure.”

“What.”

“I don’t know who it is they are trying to resurrect but it is an important figure. So much so that a great quantity of soul fragments is needed, someone with a large soul, a legendary figure!”

At his comment, I decided to ask a question as well.

“And how are you gathering the soul fragments?”

“When a living life force dies, the soul leaves it and leaves behind a trace of their soul. We gather those tiny bits.”

The second I heard that, a single thought crossed my mind.

“That’s why you attacked the elves? Your real goal was to kill the Tree of Life and gather its soul fragment. Right?”

“Ye-, yes. The Tree of Life would have an enormous soul fragment compared to any other life form.”

The real target wasn’t the elves, but the Tree of Life which was as precious as life itself for the elves.

I thought for a bit then asked again.

“Where is your master, John Omento?”

“Uh, how is it you know our master?!”

“Who are you people?! How is it you all know so much?”

The two men were completely confused.

Well, it would be hard not to be.

The two bastards were conversing amongst themselves and they mentioned the Brown Mountain.

Because of that, I could be sure that their mentor was the prime

attacker of the Brown Mountain, John Omento.

“Your master, John Omento, is probably in the South right now. Tell me in detail, what area, when, and where did you guys plan to meet?”

When they heard that I knew which direction John Omento was in, their faces were in complete despair.

They thought we already knew everything so they didn't have the courage to lie.

“Our Master does not step foot in populous areas. In a mountain in the south there is a cave, and when we are done with our work, he waits for us to meet him there. But if we do not come, the master himself will move.”

“What is John Omento's magic level?”

“The Master's stage has reached the 6th circle and he is a great necromancer!”

“Hold on! That's plenty of information! Let's go!”

“I will let you live. But the questions aren't over.”

Threatened Odin.

“There is nothing else we know!”

“No, no. What is the identity of the organization you guys are a part of?”

“Um, I don't know.”

“Don't lie, spill everything you know.”

“A secret organization for the ambition of necromancy, other than that I don't know anything. We just do what our Master tells us to do!”

“And the members of this organization?”

“That I definitely don't know. Everything about the organization is under a veil.”

Then.

“You lied.”

Marie suddenly interjected.

Odin’s eyes looked bleak.

“Hear that?”

“What do you mean, a lie?”

“We really don’t know……!”

Stricken with fear, the two guys were screaming.

But Marie spoke again.

“You lied again. Lying is bad.”

“You lied twice so two fingers each?”

Said Odin.

The two men cried and screamed.

“We really don’t know anything!”

“We said everything we know!”

“That too is a lie.”

Marie continued her firm accusations.

Odin smiled and said to the men,

“That won’t do. That women can detect lies. Now it’s three fingers.”

She detects lies?

Marie Johanna must have a skill hat allowed her to do so.

Odin grabbed one man’s wrist and slammed it onto the floor when, the man with his wrist grabbed, burst into tears and screamed.

“6 high priests!”

“Son of a bit...! You can’t.....!”

The other man went white as well. It seemed this was an important secret.

“You said 6 high priests?”

“Yes, the ones that control the organization! They know everything. The rest don’t know anything!”

Odin looked at us.

“I don’t think there is anything more we can get from them.”

“Mr. Odin, check if you have cleared your mission.”

Said Cha Ji-hye to Odin.

Odin nodded his head and shouted ‘summon board.’

Odin looked at the board that was not visible to the rest of us and he smiled.

“I have cleared my mission.”

So now it was just Cha Ji-hye and Marie left.

For Cha Ji-hye, Odin appointed her a noble title. That was everything she needed and if we get John Omento, Marie’s mission would be done too.

Shoo kaka! Su kuk!

Marie, like a flash of lightning, cut the two men’s’ necks.

Blood gushed from the two men’s necks and they fell over. Both eyes wide open with regret and rage.

‘That’s brutal.’

I was surprised at Marie, who used her bare hands to kill them without hesitation,.

But having seen it and still being fine, I was more surprised at myself.

Someone from my group killed two people who spilled all their



secrets to save their lives and it didn't bother me one bit.

‘Well, no matter, they were bound to die anyway.’

Now I too have gotten used to the exams.

“Let’s go.”

We decided to get it done with a blitz attack. We immediately headed to the mountain in the south where John Omento was.

Because I had the guider skill, we were able to find it easily.

“I have no doubt this is the right mountain.”

I said.

I figured John Omento was on top of the mountain. The guider skill told me so.

Together, we went up the mountain.

There was no way to know how strong a 6th circle necromancer was.

But when John Omento attacked me, it wasn't all that dangerous. It looks like necromancers were weak in close combat.

On top of that, there's four of us so I'm not worried about the fight.

‘We have to make it so he can't escape.’

I summoned Sylph and scouted the area as we walked ahead.

Then Sylph, who was scouting, delivered an image to me, which played inside my head.

What Sylph was seeing came to me as an image inside my head.

What was shown was a zombie horde. It easily looked to be at least 100 of them.

“There is a zombie group up ahead.”

“He must have had all the corpses brought here and turned them into undead. What a despicable scum.”

Odin grit his teeth.

Cha Ji-hye said.

“We will fight with the zombies and get their attention, Marie could you go around the hoard and kill him?”

“That sounds good. Got it, Marie?”

“Yup, I’ll be back.”

Marie quickly moved off in a different direction.

The three of us headed towards the encampment of zombies.

I summoned my double guns, one in each hand. Odin grabbed his long sword and led the way.

“I will stay at the front and break through the group.”

“It would be best for me to be in the rear.”

Said Cha Ji-hye, holding her duel scimitars.

Guns were my ace weapons, so I was in the center of the formation.

“Let’s go!”

Odin began to race ahead.

## Chapter 121 – Objective (Part 2)

---

When Odin started running ahead, I of course followed suit.

“Divine Protection of the Wind!”

As the Divine Protection of the Wind kicked in, every time my feet touched the ground, wind shot out from them and my body was lightly lifted into the air.

Hopping along, I was right behind Odin.

“Kuahhh!”

“Uh accck!”

The zombie horde discovered us and began to gather around.

“I will pierce through the horde from the front.”

“Yes!”

“Do that.”

Odin headed straight into the center of the group.

He took a big swing of his long sword and one zombie’s head flew off.

Then he used his shoulder to ram into the zombie horde.

“Uh ahhh!”

“Ku ahhh!”

Several tens of zombies got pushed aside by Odin and fell backwards.

He crushed them merely by using the increased power from the 20x boost on the synthetic muscle suit.

Odin continued and rammed through the zombies with his armor.

The zombies that were hit got flung backwards from the heavy and powerful impact of the armor. Other zombies behind got

caught in the impact and were knocked over like dominos.

Like that, Odin used his strength to begin clearing a path and I shot the zombies coming at us from the sides.

Taang – tang –

One bullet would hit five or six zombies through the head in a line. The ammo revision skill at the master level made my guns shoot out with a stronger power.

‘Nice.’

The drastically stronger bullets got me excited and I fired off in all directions.

The zombie horde was bustling all around us so that no matter where I shot, it would be a hit.

Cha Ji-hye was in the back calmly taking care of any zombies that got too close. Of course, the skill with which she cleanly sliced off a neck in one blow of her scimitar was impressive.

At Odin’s suggestion on how we should attack the horde, we nodded our heads and agreed.

John Omento was meant for Marie. It was her exam so she had to personally kill him.

The rest of us remained down below to take care of the zombie horde and spent our time that way.

Has John Omento been on alert?

New zombies began to gather, pouring in from all directions.

But no matter how many zombies there were, I wasn’t scared.

We kept at it and continued our killing spree through the zombies.

But the zombies, having gathered from all directions, numbered in the hundreds and I could not see an end in sight.

‘This is annoying, should I take care of it in one blow?’

There was one way to mass murder them all with strength.

“Kasa!”

-Bark bark!

Kasa appeared and fiercely wagged his tail.

“Light a fire.”

-Bark!

Kasa set a tree on fire.

“Create fires here and there to surround the zombie horde!”

-Bark!

Kasa flew off.

From here and there, black smoke began to rise.

The fire on one tree moved to the tree next to it and one after another, the fire grew.

“It will turn into a big forest fire, we should get away.”

“Let’s.”

We broke through the zombie horde and ran.

How far must we have ran?

The flames blazing up blocked our way.

-Kasa! Open a path!

-Bark!

Kasa used his power and the wall of fire separated creating a path. We passed through it.

Having escaped from the scene of the raging fire, we looked on at the mountain in flames.

Creating a large circle, the raging flames set aflame all the zombies within it.

‘That was simple.’

We kept wandering around mountain and killed any zombies we found.

How much time passed this way?

Suddenly, my radio went off.

When I checked it, it was a relay from Marie's radio.

"Miss Marie?"

-Hehe, hi Hyun-ho.

"Hi, what happened with John Omento?"

-I killed him.

"You did?"

-Yea, the exam door is here. I have to go on through it now.

"Yes, then we'll finish up here and be right behind you."

-Okay! See you when we get back, Hyun-ho.

The call ended.

It seems Marie's exam door appeared as soon she cleared her mission.

Since her exam was to take care of a superior level necromancer at the 5th circle or higher, as soon as she killed John Omento, her mission was complete.

On the other hand, Odin and I had the option to choose.

My mission was to eliminate at least 1 corrupt examinee. Thus, even if I killed more than that, the mission wouldn't automatically be over.

Same with Odin.

He had the mission to investigate the dark magician group that attacked the Brown Mountain. Even now, he had done plenty to investigate but he could continue to investigate even further.

"Now all that is left is Cha Ji-hye's mission. Let's just take care of

that here and now.”

Odin took out his ID card from his jacket and handed it to Cha Ji-hye.

Odin bit his finger to let out blood and let it drip onto the ID.

“Do the same.”

Cha Ji-hye drew blood too and put it on the ID.

“I, Odin, the count of Wolfenbrooke, impart the title of baronet to Christina Cha.”

‘Christina Cha’ was the name of the new identity the Denmark authorities gave to her when she was deemed dead in Korea.

Then her name was written on the ID and the symbol of baronet in the Arena was also written.

Pat!

Then the exam door appeared.

“I, too, have cleared the exam.”

At this moment Cha Ji-hye’s mission was cleared, to become acknowledged by a lord and receive a noble title.

“Do you think it matters if we too go through the same door?”

I suddenly asked, curious.

Because that exam door was meant as a gateway for Cha Ji-hye.

I was curious what would happen if a different examinee entered it.

“It doesn’t matter. If the examinee has completed the mission, he or she can pass through the door. We can all go together.”

“Okay.”

First, the two of them gave me the synthetic muscle suits and radios. If it wasn’t in my space bag, the electronic components of the item would be ruined.

I think Marie probably hid hers somewhere nearby before she went back.

Cha Ji-hye opened the exam door and went through first and following her, Odin and I went through.

The bright light engulfed us and I wasn't able to see anything but white.

\*\*\*

The sky and ground, a world of complete whiteness. An endless expanse of a white horizon is all I could see.

And then I saw Cha Ji-hye next to me and was taken aback.

“Miss Ji-hye”

“Mr. Kim Hyun-ho.”

Cha Ji-hye replied in kind, not surprised or showing any emotions at all.

“How are you here? Is it because we came through the same door?”

“Mr. Odin isn't here.”

“Oh, yeah.”

“I think they have gathered we are one team now.”

Then.

“You're right!”

A small disgusting baby angel came down from the sky.

“Yay, the two of you have achieved your goals! You worked together in the Arena and wanted to be acknowledged as one team.”

“I didn't know that it would happen so fast.”

“I too decided it would be best for you two to be one team. I gave you guys special treatment so be thankful.”



“Thanks.”

“If you know it then that’s fine.”

Annoying prick.

I want to fix how he talks this way, so annoyingly. If he was my son I would spank his butt.

“Then again you are at the age where you should have a son my age, right?”

The baby angel read my thoughts and giggled.

‘Kuk.’

Hit in a weak spot, I just kept my mouth shut.

“Summon board.”

Cha Ji-hye had no intention in becoming involved in our bickering and summoned her board.

Only then did I summon my own board and checked my exam scores.

-Name: Kim Hyun-ho

-Class: 33

-Karma: +31,000

-Mission: rest until the next exam

-Time Limit: 100 days

For a second, I doubted my own eyes.

My class went from 21 to 33, I had jumped up 11 levels.

And my 17,900 karma jumped all the way to 31,000 karma.

“Uh, what is this?”

“What do you mean, did you sprain your eyes?”

“.....”

Isn’t this too much a jump?

Was eliminating six corrupt examinees that great of a feat?

Alright let's say the karma is correct but it's unbelievable to go from class 21 to class 33.

"The class is a reflection of the examinee's competence. After you finished the 6th exam last time, and you were resting, you got a lot stronger didn't you?"

"Oh, that is included in this?"

"Yes."

I got karma for killing those two corrupt Chinese examinees. And I also bought karma with money.

If you included all those things, then I could understand it.

"Now now, if there's nothing else, be on your way."

The baby angel summoned the exam door and as if to shoo away a fly, gestured for us to leave.

Cha Ji-hye marched towards the door and left. And I, excited at my great scores, with a happy heart, followed after her.

That was how the 7th exam ended.

\*\*\*

Reality.

I'm back at the Nordic exam group headquarters and everyone was reunited.

"Did you get a lot of karma?"

At my question, Odin looked at me with a very satisfied face and nodded his head.

"Thanks to you. Learning about the 6 leaders must have been very important, I got a very high score."

"Me too!"

Marie was hopping around and attached herself to my back.

“Same here.”

Cha Ji-hye added simply.

We, for the first time in a long while, had a proper meal and discussed things about the next exam.

“For me, probably in my next exam I will have to return to being the Count of Wolfenbrooke. I cannot leave the family and area for very long.”

That was a reasonable guess.

Otherwise, because the Count of Wolfenbrooke was recently engaged in war, it was risky for him to be away for long periods of time.

At a time like this, for a ruler like Odin to leave his place for a long time would lead to a mess.

“Since we investigated the dark magic organization in this exam, the next exam will probably be to share this knowledge far and wide. That is the natural flow of things.”

Odin was impressed by Cha Ji-hye’s opinion.

“Indeed. It will be a mission suited to my title and power. If I spread the word, it will become known through the whole continent.”

Odin was a powerful lord and his standing in the world was high.

And if someone like him mentioned the existence and objective of the dark magic organization, such news would spread through the whole land.

All the nations would be on guard and hunt for the dark magicians.

That alone would greatly restrict the organization’s movements. Since they wouldn’t be able to act out in the open.

“Since I killed corrupt examinees in this exam, the next exam will

probably involve corrupt examinees and the pirates they've gotten in bed with. I'll probably have to fight them?"

"You probably will. They were dressed the same as the pirates at the Deport harbor too.

"We heard the pirates rose to power very quickly, I think it was because they were working together with corrupt examinees from China."

At Cha Ji-hye's words, I nodded my head.

"I too think that in my next exam, I will be fighting pirates."

"Be careful. If you aren't careful you might end up having to fight Lee Chang-wee. Six of them died so the Chinese side will be pretty pissed too."

Well, what's one to do?

From the moment they tried to kidnap me, I crossed a point of no return with the Chinese.

But even if I were to go up against Lee Chang-wee, I was confident.

I had a way to fight him.

One was the ammo revision power. That plus the anti-material sniper rifle AW50F should be plenty to deal with him.

The other was 31,000 karma.

With this much karma, I could raise my main skill spirit summons to superior and still have some left!

Superior level spirit summons!

That was what Derrick showed me!

# Chapter 122 – Becoming a Strong One (Part 1)

---

Superior level spirit summons!

That was the same as the legendary elf warrior Derek.

‘If you get to the superior level, the spirit assimilates with you, that type of skill is possible!’

Derek combined with his Kasa spirit and then swung his sword and rained down Armageddon, that grandiose act would forever be burned into my mind.

I can do that too!

With that much power, would that not be enough for a matched fight with Lee Chang-wee?

“Anyway, I am sure we will be up against the Chinese in the next exam.”

Said Cha Ji-hye.

“The story of you and Odin obliterating the pirates has spread far and wide by now. The Chinese, who have lost 6 people, will grit their teeth and attack with a vengeance.”

“I’m sure they will. Not just one or two people but six people, even though China is big and has the numbers, they’ll be up in arms about this. There might even be a formal complaint against the Nordic exam group.”

“That won’t happen though. They won’t be able to admit their involvement with the pirates for that.”

That would ruin their national image...

But that means they’ll retaliate in secret. And that’s even scarier.

“Anyway, the two of you have a high chance of encountering the pirates so it would be good to prepare my navy. We’ll have to

redeem our karma prizes first then.”

“I think we’ll have to.”

We had a meal and I met in a quiet place with Cha Ji-hye.

“First of all, I’m thinking of raising my spirit summons to superior level.”

“You raised your karma by so much, I think that is a good choice.”

For now, I summoned my board and I raised my spirit summons to superior level 1.

-Spirit summons (main skill): summon a superior spirit and wield the power of mother nature, you yourself receive the energy of nature, your body is now capable of exponential growth.

\*Spirits available for summon: Sylph, Kasa

\*Superior level 1: summon time 10 hours, combine with your spirit and wield the abilities of your spirits through your own body.

-Remaining karma: +5,600

The instant I raised my skill, I had a feeling I couldn’t explain and a warm energy began to flow through me.

‘The energy of nature!’

I was overflowing with power like when I wore the synthetic muscle suit.

‘This is how Derek was always able to run faster than me.’

In addition, despite having gone from intermediate level 2 to superior level 1 in one jump, I still have 5,600 karma left!

‘This 7th exam was incredible.’

I can tell why dropped examinees moved around so carefully.

Just by killing one, you get thousands of karma basically for free!

For an examinee, there isn't a more lucrative prey.

'If they knew six of their examinees were killed by me, the Chinese are going to be feeling pretty upset.'

The one thing that really worries me is that the Chinese might end up going after my family in their anger.

The Nordic exam group is protecting my family right now but if the Chinese make up their minds to really go after my family, that amount of a safety net isn't sufficient.

'My only choice is to get strong and go back to Korea.'

For now, since my spirit summons is superior level 1, I have gotten close to strong enough.

I said to Cha Ji-hye,

"I will test out the superior summons level power and then decide how to spend the rest of the karma."

"Okay, do that."

"By the way, how are you planning on using your karma?"

"First, I'm planning on focusing it on the aura control."

Cha Ji-hye's current karma account was 4,100.

The skills she's acquainted herself with thus far were simple and didn't have much variety.

Aura control intermediate level 1, the expert level which was enough to barely use aura through her weapon.

And the physical strength buff intermediate level 1, one level beyond the entry level 5 that was the human physical limit.

And the guider skill entry level 1.

"Even if I clear one or two more exams, I think it is impossible to catch up to you, Kim Hyun-ho."

'Probably.'

If she doesn't take the lead in the exams, she won't be able to catch up to me.

Even when I think about it, I've progressed very fast.

"Because of that, from a long-term standpoint, I've decided to focus on my main skill. I will try my hardest to not become a burden to you."

"What do you mean a burden. You are always a help."

Cha Ji-hye invested 3,600 karma into her aura control and raised it to intermediate level 3. She decided to, for now, just keep the remaining 500 karma.

Thanks to the synthetic muscle suit it's possible to overcome the body limits so she decided to invest in the physical strength buff later when she has more wiggle room.

Focus on the main skill.

The same way Odin was able to quickly become a strong player.

Cha Ji-hye wants to become strong like Odin in a very short time.

'I'll eventually see a Cha Ji-hye that has become an aura master.'

I imagine a double aura scimitar wielding Cha Ji-hye.

'Pretty awesome.'

The image of the cool Cha Ji-hye with splendid and swift blade wielding skills.

Her danger level would be incredible. Basically a human woman version of Derek.

"What are you thinking about?"

"Huh! Oh, nothing."

I got startled at Cha Ji-hye's question and got out of my thoughts.

And then with perfect timing, an unwelcome guest interrupted us.



“Hyun-ho!”

It was Marie.

Marie suddenly burst in and exchanged looking between me and Cha Ji-hye.

Thrust (Hug)!

She thrusts her arms into mine and stared competitively at Cha Ji-hye.

“What is it? We were in the midst of getting our karma prizes.”

It was common etiquette to provide privacy/leave the room when an examinee was getting his/her karma prize. Because how someone spent their karma was one of their biggest secrets.

“Hyun-ho!”

“Yes, yes.”

“Are you going back to Korea?”

“Yes, I need to.”

“Don’t go!”

“I have to. I’m worry about my family.”

“Don’t go!”

Screamed Marie.

But she didn’t throw a fit like she used to before.

Marie was already much more mentally stabilized, and it had been a while since she was hysteric.

Her lowered mental age wasn’t easy to recover from, but it was safe to say she was out of the throes of her curse symptoms.

I stroked Marie’s hair as I said.

“But I still have to go. I’ll come back so don’t worry.”

“Don’t go. I don’t want Hyun-ho to go.”

Marie looked tearful and repeatedly said ‘don’t go.’

“She can go with you to Korea then.”

Cha Ji-hye suddenly chimed in.

“What?”

I suspected my ears of hearing wrong.

“Miss Marie Johanna can go to Korea with you.”

“Yeah! Let’s do that!”

Marie sprung into a smile and frantically nodded her head.

“Will Odin allow it?”

“Huh? Allow it? Why do I need his permission?”

Marie tilted her head to the side.

“If I want to go, I go. I don’t need his permission.”

... Causing so much inconvenience like a little child, being in that position but still realizing she’s of the age where she doesn’t need a guardian.

“I’m going to Korea! I’ll go tell him!”

Marie left quickly.

How she came was how she left, like a flash of lightning.

I just stared at Cha Ji-hye.

“What are you thinking?”

“About what?”

“Marie Johanna. Aren’t you made uncomfortable by her?”

“Does she make you uncomfortable?”

“Well I’m okay but she doesn’t like you.”

“I like Miss Johanna.”

“What?”

“She’s like a cat, she’s cute.”

“.....”

Right.

This woman likes cats. Especially Sylph.

Oh, now that I think about that, I wonder how a superior level Sylph and Kasa will have changed?

While I’m on it, I summoned the both of them.

-Meow.

-Bark!

The both of them don’t look very different from before at all.

Sylph’s body was the same, but her fur had grown longer and had a cute bushiness.

On the other hand, Kasa had completely grown from a puppy to a full-grown dog. Not a very large breed, kind of like the size of a full grown Jindo.

They’ve both grown more but despite that they both crawled up me.

Thanks to Sylph’s long fur and Kasa’s larger size, it felt chaotic.

“.....!”

Seeing all this before her, Cha Ji-hye’s eyes flickered.

Cha Ji-hye’s eyes were clearly following Sylph.

“Would you like to hold Sylph?”

“Oh, um, if you don’t mind?”

“You didn’t say no.”

“I don’t mind either way.....”

I just picked up Sylph and threw her to Cha Ji-hye.

-Meow!

Sylph carelessly spread her limbs and landed right in Cha Ji-hye's arms.

Cha Ji-hye's eyes shook like crazy and it made me happy to see.

After she became an examinee, this was the first time I saw her human side.

A bit later, Odin and Marie came to us.

"Marie said she is going to go with you to Korea."

Odin's face looked a bit exhausted. I'm sure Marie nagged him quite a lot.

"Miss Johanna wants to go and if she is with him, if/when there is a threat from the Chinese group, it would be reassuring to have her."

Said Cha Ji-hye. So that was her real reason. She didn't want her to tag along just cause she's cute.

"Will that be alright? I'm sure you've realized this by now, but she's pretty high maintenance and difficult to manage."

"No, I'm not, I'm an adult!"

Shouted Marie as she threw a knife. Odin grabbed the flying knife with his right hand and sighed.

"Will you be okay with this?"

"Yes, we'll be okay. If it won't be a too much of a loss for the Nordic exam group...."

"How would it be a loss for us? It would be good if Marie's presence will help safeguard the both of you. You two aren't a part of our group but we are all in the same boat now."

"Haha I suppose so."

The Nordic exam group was already developing the recon satellite to take to the Arena.

For Cha Ji-hye and I, the Nordic exam Group was our most

trusted ally.

“Anyway, did you get your karma prize?”

“Not all yet. First off, I raised my spirit summons to superior level 1.”

“Ho, your main skill is at the superior level now. Is that not the same level of spirit summons as Derek of the Zelkova village?”

“Haha I think so.”

“How exciting. Honestly, if the opportunity presents itself I would like to spar with him.”

As he said so, he looked at me with an intent gaze.

I laughed as I said,

“I want to try too. Would it be okay if I request a sparring session?”

“Sounds good. But let’s not use weapons.”

“Okay.”

His aura blade or my guns, both of them are lethal, so we decide not to use any weapons at all.

“Follow me. I have a good location.”

We get into the elevator together and went to the Nordic exam group headquarters basement.

Getting off at the B6 level, I saw a door encased in thick steel or iron.

The steel door looks as if its containing the space that holds a myriad of dangers.

“It is a fighting arena with walls made of steel alloy. In here, you can do anything.”

It’s as if he’s telling me he’s going to go all out and to prepare myself.

Odin and I opened the steel door and went inside.

“Sylph!”

-Meow?

“Um, can you combine with me?”

-Meow.

Sylph nodded her head.

Pat!

Sylph jumped into my chest.

Then I felt a surge and she gets sucked into me.

Hwiiiing!

Suddenly, with my body at the center, were gusts of wind. I become encased in a small tornado.

The power of nature that was within me bubbles up inside me.

“Ohh, so this is the spirit fusion. Now its my turn!”

Odin starts emitting his aura.

The blue aura covered his entire body and it began to flow out of him.

As Odin headed towards me, I reflexively made fists.

But then.

Boooong!

An incredible force of wind came out.

I was speechless as I witnessed Odin being flung across the entire room.

## Chapter 123 – Becoming a strong one (Part 2)

---

“Ho, impressive.”

Having been flung all the way to the wall, Odin got up in a shaken fashion.

“Are you okay?”

“I am. But without a sword, I don’t think I can get close to you.”  
Probably.

I didn’t know myself that I was this powerful.

If I wrapped my body in a strong whirlwind, no one would be able to get close to me.

‘Should I try it?’

Hwiiing!!

Paaaat-!

The power of nature moved and expelled outwards and a strong gust encompassed me.

With me as its center and about 3 m in height, a whirlwind was created.

‘Interesting!’

Sylph’s abilities harness themselves how I want them, there is no bigger surprise.

‘What would happen if I turn the whirlwind into a wind dagger?’

The thought alone is dreadful. It could rip everything around me into shreds.

I desynched with Sylph and then summoned Kasa.

“Kasa, let’s synch.”

-Bark!

With excitement, he hurled himself at me.

Hwa lu lu lu! (swoosh)

My entire body lit up in red flames.

Thankfully, my clothes didn't all disintegrate in the flames.

The flames moved exactly how I commanded them to move in my head.

Having created all kinds of shapes by molding the flames like clay, I was satisfied and nodded my head.

"This is really nice."

"I want to use my sword and really fight you now."

"Haha I politely decline."

Eventually, Odin's sparring never really came to fruition.

But I was able to verify the power of the superior level spirit summons.

After that day, I lingered at the Nordic exam group headquarters and tested my spirit summons.

First off, I tried to see if I could synch with Sylph and Kasa simultaneously but that was impossible.

If I synch with Sylph, Kasa gets kicked out and if I do it with Kasa, Sylph gets kicked out.

Eventually I had to stop the two of them from bickering over wanting to synch with me.

The combination of the superior spirit summons and shooting wasn't all that great either.

In the synced status, the guns didn't really help much.

Derek used his sword to create Armageddon, but I have to pull the trigger to shoot a bullet so I can't replicate him with that.



Its actually better to swing my arms covered in flames, so there isn't really a need to use bullets.

‘Still, the guns aren't completely useless.’

Even if I'm not synced, Sylph and Kasa have grown more powerful by becoming superior leveled.

Kasa's power and control over the explosive power of the gunpowder let him push out the bullet much faster, Sylph was able to rotate the bullet and increase the penetration power.

Thus, the spirit shooting ability greatly increased as well.

The ammo revision mastery also meant the Neilson H2 I shoot can no longer be called a handgun, that's how powerful it is now.

I think it could penetrate the shell of a tank so its pretty much done and dusted.

The anti-material sniper rifle AW50F plus with the power of the spirit shooting has become unspeakably stronger.

Honestly, its confusing whether the AW50F should still be called a rifle or a bazooka!

“A bazooka? There's a gun like that.”

Said the guns expert Neilson to me.

“There are several anti-material sniper rifles that use a 20mm caliber bullet but at that level, they're basically bazookas. If you have a beast like that, it is no different than you walking around with a missile.”

At the mention of 20mm, I was at a loss for words.

The 12.7mm of my AW50F already boasts a monstrous level of power.

So then how much is 20 mm?

“I don't think I am in immediate need of such a crazy sniper rifle. I am plenty satisfied with the AW50F I have now.”

“I’m sure that’s true. For a guy who can get a wyvern with a revolver, you probably don’t need a 20mm. Not like you’re going to try and get a dragon.”

So, I established my fighting pattern.

Long distance shooting with the AW50F.

Majority of the shooting with the two Neilson H2.

One on one fighting with spirit synchronization.

Especially in regard to the spirit synchronization, I discovered a specialty factor.

When I am synced with Sylph and using the Divine Protection of the Wind, the amount of power I can use has doubled!

The Divine Protection of the Wind is essentially rooted in a spirit, so I think the synergy was created from both of us being combined together.

Currently, my Divine Protection of the Wind was intermediate level 1.

The similar skill, Divine Protection of Fire, was entry level 1.

‘Both of them are synthesis skills that don’t require a lot of karma to raise levels. With these, when I am synced, I get twice the power, that’s an incredible gain!’

First, I checked to see how much karma I needed to raise the intermediate level of Divine Protection of the Wind to mastery level.

-Divine Protection of the Wind (synthesis skill) the karma needed to raise to the master is being shown.

-Divine Protection of the Wind (synthesis skill): stir up wind with your body. It is influenced by the user’s concentration and skill level along with the spirit’s skill level.

\*Master: 3 hours a day

-Will use 4,100 karma to reach mastery.

-Remaining karma: +5,600

‘4,100 karma.....’

I have 5,600 karma now so I have more than enough to raise it.

If I master it, I could get 3 hours a day with no cool time, I like that.

‘Okay. I’ll raise the Divine Protection of the Wind first.’

I shouted at my board.

“I will master Divine Protection of the Wind!”

Pat!

The light shone out of the board.

-4,100 karma used to raise Divine Protection of the Wind (assist skill) to the master level -Remaining karma: +1,500

And then I could sense the energy of nature much more than before ago.

I will probably need Sylph more than Kasa, so I invested focused in the Divine Protection of the Wind ‘I’ll have to test it once again.’

As I got in position and synched with Sylph, I tried out the Divine Protection of the Wind.

And right over my hand, I created a tiny gust of wind.

But,

Kwak kwak kwak kwak kwak kwak!

The gust of wind spun around crazily like a drill.

‘Woah.’

I only generated a tiny bit gust of wind but it has this much power.

Through the Divine Protection of the Wind’s exponential power,

it's strength has now been raised by 3 times.

‘If superior level 1's power is 3 times as strong, I should be able to harness more power than Derek.’

The only downside is that in the synced state, I have to fight without a weapon.

A long-distance weapon like a gun is meaningless and I've never wielded a weapon before, so I won't use it.

The boxing I learned at the very beginning or the games of tag I played with the elves, that's the only kind of “fighting” I've used so far.

Of course, even if I were to fight haphazardly, my body movements are that of a legendary martial artist. Thanks to the reflex skill at superior level 1.

‘During this break period, I'll have to polish my kickboxing skills.’

I think I'll learn it from Cha Ji-hye.

\*\*\*

I returned to Korea with Marie and Cha Ji-hye.

We had to go through Switzerland so we could set up Cha Ji-hye's bank account.

She had the gift of the wyvern's majeong I gave her so she sold it to the Nordic exam group, and received 470,000 swiss francs. In our currency, its about the equivalent of 5.3 billion won. (5 million USD) When we came into Korea, Cha Ji-hye had to go through the foreign entrance with Marie.

I felt bad for Cha Ji-hye, who had lost her identity and country. Even though she didn't seem to care.

“You have the money now, should you look for a place?”

“I don't necessarily see the reason for such.”

“..... hm?”

“I am very comfortable at your place Mr. Kim Hyun-ho. Or do you find living together uncomfortable?”

“Um, no, of course not.”

It almost seemed like she was saying ‘I died because of you, am I a nuisance now?’ so I quickly shook my head no.

“Then that’s that. I thank you for the arrangement for a while.”

“Um, sure.”

“Hyun-ho, what about me?”

Marie suddenly asked.

“Stay a couple days and then go home.”

When I answered while I stroked her hair, Marie looked peeved.

She thoroughly expressed her disappointment, but having already increased my tolerance to Marie, I was able to easily ignore it.

We took the taxi home and I felt emotional.

My home, that I’ve returned to after such a long time.

But a minor problem had come up.

Since Cha Ji-hye was using the guest room, I was wondering where Marie should sleep.

“I can sleep with Hyun-ho.”

“.....”

I immediately turned on my computer and went to an online furniture site and ordered a small bed. In return for paying double for delivery and set up, I was promised it would be delivered today.

Thus, like a flash of lightening, the study room I used was set up with a bed. Marie looked even more disappointed.

That evening, to commemorate Marie’s first time in Korea, we

went around a few places.

We were touring around Gyeongbokgoong (Gyeongbok Palace), Marie kept sticking to me and making things complicated.

“Oh my, your girlfriend is foreign.”

“I’ve never seen one of our guys dating a white girl before.”

“But who is that other girl next to them?”

On my left was Cha Ji-hye and on my right was Marie. With such an accompaniment going around the palace, everywhere I went I became a sight.

Both women were very beautiful but it was actually due to the very clingy Marie.

I got tired and we got dinner at Korean table d’hote restaurant and returned home. Marie actually used her chopsticks, which she’d never used before, very well.

But then that night.....

Ring, ring.

Reflexively looking for my comm device, I belatedly reached for my smartphone in my pocket.

Its mom.

“Hello?”

-Son, so you’re alive?

“Yep, alive and well. How about you mom, are you well?”

-Son, I’m so lonely and dying. I think I’ll die alone.

“What are you talking about, dying alone. You have a sturdy noona by your side.”

-Hyun-joo, she may as well be not here. Except for the bare necessities or me telling her to come for a marriage set up/blind date, we don’t talk at all. She doesn’t ever open her mouth.

“.....”

Without me or Hyun-ji, I can see how mom is lonely.

And noona's specialty is making the people around her lonely.

-Anyway, son, I heard you were travelling internationally lately?

“Yea, I got back today.”

-So, you're in Bucheon right now?

“Yep.”

-Where in Bucheon exactly is your home?

“Do you know where Hyun-ji's studio is?”

-I do, I've been a couple times.

“It's close to there. It's a quick walk.”

-Oh, really?

She sudden sounded very happy.

This tone was very similar to when Hyun-ji puts me in a pickle.

I felt a sense of uneasiness.

“Mother.”

-What is it, son?

“I will ask one thing of thee.”

-Go ahead, ask.

“Are you, by any chance, at Hyun-ji's right now?”

-Ho ho ho, how quick witted of you.

‘I've been tricked!’

All this time, I blocked my home off extremely well so that my family could never come by, but I've been properly deceived by mom today.

“Oh, but I have to go out for work pretty soon.....”

-Ho ho, excuses won't work, son.

“Kuk!”

Mom laughed capriciously.

-You said it's a quick walk son, so I'll head out now.

“But, but.....!”

-Hyun-ji hasn't even been to your house either, but I'll see why you've been hiding it from us today.

“Well right now I have some work.....”

-See you later. I verified your address yesterday off the family register.

Then she hung up.

“.....”

My face went pale.

If they know I live in such a splendid penthouse, they'll have a lot of questions.

Then what will my explanation be?

And Cha Ji-hye and Marie are here too?!

I quickly called both of them to the living room.

“Please spend tonight at the hotel! Please!”

“Why?”

Marie tilted her head. I told her my mom is going to be here soon.

Marie's eyes twinkled.

“I want to meet your mom!”

A feeling of hopelessness began to settle in.



## Chapter 124 – Chaos

---

Thanks to Marie throwing a tantrum about wanting to meet my mom, I hadn't been able to get both girls out of the house and I was in the midst of trembling from fear when.

[Mom: I'm here, son. <3]

“Ack!”

I shouted as I quickly typed a response.

[Me: How are you here already?]

[Mom: I came by car. Haha]

Mom wasn't the kind of person that would ride a taxi for a short distance. That means.....

[Me: is noona with you?]

[Mom: Hyun-joo and Hyun-ji, everyone.]

[Me: Why noona?]

[Mom: she came with me to see Hyun-ji.]

I got the gist.

Most big companies first half-year open recruitment was over but there was still no news of employment from Hyun-ji.

They would have both tried to threaten/pressure Hyun-ji into joining the chicken business world.

With noona's whip and mom's carrot/enticement double attack and Hyun-ji's pitiful resistance, it was clear as day how it went down.

‘Hold on.....’

If Hyun-ji sees these two women in my place, who knows what she'll assume?!

[Me: where are you right now?]

[Mom: we're just getting in the elevator.]

I tried to convince Marie once more.

“Hey Marie, can you please help me, hm?”

“Okay.”

Said Marie, smiling happily.

“I'll be real nice to your mom!”

“Achhhh!”

I despaired as I grabbed my own hair.

Then.

“It is a simple solution.”

Cha Ji-hye started talking in Korean, so Marie couldn't understand.

“It's simple?”

“Your family can't understand what Marie is saying.”

“Ah!”

Now that she mentioned it, that was true.

But she's always stuck to me and acting cutesy, that behavior was more than enough to be misconstrued and shock my family?

“Because Miss Johanna's mental state puts her at a young mental age, tell them she follows you as a father figure.”

She continued to say.

“And I am a Denmark transplant businesswoman and here in Korea on business, you can tell them you have the job of escorting me.”

“Okay, let's say we use that, but the reason that both of you are in my home?”

“Miss Johanna is a distant relative of mine, she likes you so much

she won't leave your side and thus I am in your debt."

I was in awe.

How can she create lies so easily!

"And this house?"

"Say you got it as a gift from Chairman Park Jin-seong, for saving his life in Denmark."

I was flustered.

"Well, my family thinks my employment itself is the gift for saving a Jin-seong group board member who got lost on a hike. But now this time I've rescued the actual Chairman and gotten this house?"

I could already see my family's suspicious gazes if I tried to sell them that story.

"You can just argue. They have no way to verify the truth, what can they do?"

"....."

That was true.

'Ah, whatever.'

I just decided to stop thinking about it so much. I'll just let it play out as it will at this point.

Ding dong~

The doorbell was ringing.

As soon as I opened the door, the women of my family rushed in.

"Son~!"

"Uh, uh....."

"Oh my, my! Look at this house! My goodness!"

As my mom came into the house, she was amazed by the size of the expansive living room.

Then she ran into the two women in the living room. Following behind her, my noona and Hyun-ji had the same reactions too.

“Who are you?”

My mom asked carefully.

“It’s Hyun-ho’s mom! I’m Hyun-ho’s wife!”

Empty headed Marie got up and boldly replied. But there was no way my family could understand the Arena language.

I quickly intervened.

“This is Cha Ji-hye, she is a businesswoman here from Denmark.”

“Denmark?”

Finally, Cha Ji-hye politely introduced herself.

“Hello, nice to meet you. I am Christina Cha, and my Korean name is Cha Ji-hye. I do business in Denmark, and am here for work, and staying under his care.”

“Oh, but how are you in my son’s house at this late hour.....”

I spoke up.

“She is a guest of Jin-seong Group. I am in charge of escorting her and things worked out where she is staying here.”

“How did they work out that way?”

My mom’s face changed into the face of a parent wanting grandchildren.

And Hyun-ji looked at me like a piece of garbage. I slightly tilted my head and avoided Hyun-ji’s gaze.

Cha Ji-hye, with a formal tone, crushed my moms hopes.

“This is Marie Johanna, she is a distant relative of mine. Marie has a developmental disability, and she must have taken a liking to Mr. Kim Hyun-ho, we are very sorry to intrude on him this way.”

My mom looked straight at Marie who keeps babbling on in a non-understandable language (Arena language) “She does look a bit like that. What a pity, she is very pretty.”

But then.

“Was für Geschäfte machen Sie? (what kind of business do you do)?”\*

With a suspicious gaze, noona had been looking at us.

‘Umm, what the what?’

I was completely surprised.

What did she just say? Does noona actually know Danish?!

Cha Ji-hye was unable to answer and just stood there blankly.

“.....”

“.....”

Noona and Cha Ji-hye suddenly had a very awkward moment.

“Did you perhaps not understand what I just said?”

“No, I was wondering why you weren’t just speaking in Korean.”

“Regardless, could you answer my question?”

“Aside from the strangeness of it all, I couldn’t understand what you said.”

“I will ask again. Was für Geschäfte machen Sie?”

“Your accent is quite bad, and I cannot understand. Just ask me in Korean, please.”

“Is my Danish bad?”

“Yes.”

“Well, I wasn’t speaking Danish, that was German.”

“Your accent is so bad, I couldn’t tell if it was Danish or German.”

Uh, wow, Cha Ji-hye! Such shamelessness!

But then.

“Ich bin Hyun-ho’s Frau!” (I am Hyun-ho’s wife)!”

Marie suddenly shouted in German.

Noona asked Cha Ji-hye.

“Is what she said true?”

“Do not pay attention to Marie. As I said, she is not in her right mind.”

“Why don’t you tell me what it is she just said then.”

“She says so much nonsense, I don’t pay any attention to what she says.”

With all this push and pull, Cha Ji-hye’s expression doesn’t change one bit, I’m finding her quite scary.

“Ich bin Hyun-ho’s Frau!”

Marie pointed to herself again and shouted.

‘Could you please shut up, you crazy woman!!’

I despaired inside.

“Did you hear her that time?”

“As I have said, Marie is not in her right mind so pay no attention.”

At the two woman’s chilly encounter, everyone but Marie was sweltering.

“Um, sis, what did that woman say?”

Hyun-ji inches towards her (noona) and asked.

Noona replied.

“She said she’s Hyun-ho’s wife.”

“What?!”

From how she was glaring at me, Hyun-ji looked as if she was going to attack me that second.

“What, no! Could you not look at me like that?”

I was covered in a cold sweat and stuttered out a response.

But Marie continued and opened her hands and kept chattering on in German.

Noona said.

“She says she even has a wedding ring.”

“That, that.... That’s just something I bought her off the street. She nagged so much for it.....!”

“As I’ve said before, Marie is not in her right mind so pay no heed.”

Cha Ji-hye, with perseverance and unchanging in her businesslike tone, spoke up. An artistic level of shamelessness.

Then noona asked Marie something in German.

Marie tilted her head to the side and then shook her head and said something.

I have to kick Marie out. No matter how I do it, I must!

Noona said to Cha Ji-hye.

“Considering she’s not in her right mind, her communication is very clear. This woman says you are Korean, not from Denmark.”

“Marie sometimes doesn’t like me and will say such things. I will scold her later.”

“From what I can tell, you don’t know Danish or German, you appear to be 100% Korean.”

“I don’t know why you find me so suspicious, but since you keep thinking that, I will show you my ID.”

Cha Ji-hye brought out her passport from her bag.

The passport she got from Denmark of course has her identity as a citizen of Denmark.

“A fake passport carries a heavy penalty.”

Noona tried to pick another fight.

“That is my passport. You keep doing this, I find it repulsive.”

“I apologize if I have made you feel bad. I just find it odd that someone from Denmark knows neither Danish nor German.”

“Regardless, I don’t have your name yet.”

Cha Ji-hye coolly changed the subject.

“..... my apologies. I am Kim Hyun-joo. I am Hyun-ho’s older sister.”

“Nice to meet you, miss Hyun-joo.”

Cha Ji-hye extended her hand and noona carelessly extended hers and they shook hands. Noona kept losing the interrogative timing.

“Actually.....”

Mom, who had been quiet, interrupted.

“Yes, go ahead.”

“Could you stop lying and just tell us the truth? What your relationship with our son is?”

Asked my mom.

Cha Ji-hye became silent for a while. A long while later, she opened her mouth.

“I am actually Mr. Hyun-ho’s girlfriend.”

I started to hiccup.

“Well, then, just now, why did you.....”

“Hyun-ho begged me not to say so, so I uncharacteristically told a lie. I am very sorry, mother, sister, miss.”



“Why did you lie??”

Mom was simply not understanding what was happening at all.

“Because we are having an af.....”

“Stop-!!”

I was in utter despair.

In the end I had to introduce Cha Ji-hye as my girlfriend.

I refuted by saying I felt bad that I had a new girlfriend so quickly after breaking up with Min-jeong so decided to keep it a secret.

“Hmph, ridiculous! You dumped Min-jeong for this girl?”

Hyun-ji stared at me like I was a piece of crap.

“It’s not like that.”

“I’m going to tell Min-jeong everything.”

“Don’t tattle!! I’m going to take back your card!”

At my yelling, Hyun-ji must’ve been alarmed cause it looked like she was stepping down.

“Ich bin die Frau des Hyun-ho!”

“Son, then this woman is?”

“..... that woman actually is crazy.”

“Ich bin die Frau des Hyun-ho!”

Marie was shouting loudly in German.

Finally, I felt like the chaos was starting to settle.

“Son, but how is it you have such a luxurious and splendid house? On the register, it’s your house.”

“That, um.....!”

The chaos began again.

\*\*\*

“What are we going to do about this now!”

A fat old man with a long white beard shouted out..

Sseng guh lang! (Ting/tang sound)

The alcohol bottle the old man threw hit the young man's head in front of him and broke.

But the young man, without any injury, stayed calm and didn't even blink an eye.

The young man, with a sparkle in his eyes, didn't blink once and stared back at the old man.

Against that gaze, the old man was overwhelmed and coughed.

“I got overexcited.”

“Calm down. That isn't good for your health.”

Said the young man. That was a warning.

“Hm, hm, I know. But more importantly, what are we going to do? Not only did we not finish the job, we've already lost 8 to that son of a bitch?”

“It's simple.”

Said the young man.

“We are past a capture, now we have to kill for punishment. Kim Hyun-ho, Odin too, and their whole gang.”

“And is that easier said than done?”

“If I intercede.”

Boasted the young man.

The old man must have approved because he made a slight nod.

The young man's name, Lee Chang-wee.

The chaos began again.

## Chapter 125 – Synthesis (Part 1)

---

Our family sat down with lots of beer and we talked since we hadn't all gathered together in a long time, We kind of talked about the house thing too.

I again used the story I gave Hyun-ji before, that I invested in my friends' startup business and it exploded.

"That board member I rescued before, from Mt. Taejo. The guy that got me the job."

"Yes, yes."

"He helped me out and used the company my friends set up as a subcontractor. Thanks to that, since I invested in the startup, I keep making good money."

Thankfully, noona who is always suspicious must be tired from the verbal wrestling she did with Cha Ji-hye because she didn't hound me.

But honestly, why would she when her younger sibling is making money? And she also knows for sure that I don't have the wherewithal to make money through conning like a criminal.

Mom clapped her hands in glee.

"Oh my, my, finally, you've made it, son! You've got money and a girl, now all you need to do is put a grandbaby in my arms!"

"Again with that grandbaby nagging."

"Son, you just wait till you're my age."

Then mom kind of scooted over towards Cha Ji-hye and asked.

"How old are you may I ask?"

"I am 29 years old. Please lower your speech, mother."

"Ho ho, shall I? It's good to hear the word mother. Honey, don't use your cold (matter of fact) style of speech, you can relax."

“I find this comfortable. If it bothers you to hear such speech, I apologize.”

She spent 15 years in the Arena but she ultimately couldn't get rid of that army manner of speech.

.... But did mom just call her honey?

“Ho ho ho, not at all. Concise and nice to hear.”

“Thank you.”

“Anyway, if you're 29, you should start... no?”

“What do you mean?”

“When are you planning on marrying, honey?”

“I have no intention.”

Cha Ji-hye didn't blink an eye and answered firmly.

“Oh my goodness, why?!”

Mom was shocked at Cha Ji-hye's straightforwardness.

“I'm sorry. I plan on living unmarried. Hyun-ho had the same thought and we decided to date.”

“Um, son!”

Mom's tearful face looked towards me.

“You want a single life?”

“Uh, um, yes.”

At the sudden development of this situation, I got flustered and with a bitter face she replied.

“Why would son want to be single? Weren't you single all this time because you didn't have the means for a woman?”

“Well, yes but when I thought about it I wondered whether there really was a rush to get married.”

Mom then went numb from the shock.

Noona and I and Hyun-ji, she looked around at the 3 of us, gave up, and sighed in lamentation.

“One can’t marry, one doesn’t want to marry, and the remaining one can’t even get a job.....”

Feeling ashamed, the three siblings bowed our heads down.

Mom felt dizzy and lay down.

“It’s all wrong. I’m doomed to die without seeing a grandbaby. The convenience store family next door, their four daughters have all married and already have two grandbabies they bragged.....”

That stupid convenience store ajumma!

It’s always like this. Mom brags that the business is doing well and the convenience store lady retaliates by bragging about two grandkids.

\*\*\*

My family pounded down the alcohol and spread out. Marie, despite her young mental age, seemed to really enjoy beer.

The next morning I woke up on the sofa. Next to me was Marie, clinging on to me and asleep.

I tried to remove her from my arms but like some snake she wrapped her arms and legs around me and didn’t let go.

I tried to get her loose but she wouldn’t let up. Is this jiu-jitsu?

“Miss Marie, you’re awake are you?”

“Snore.... Snore....”

“Suddenly pretending to snore won’t help you.”

“Hehe.”

Marie suddenly opened her eyes wide. Big and blue eyes, glistening and cute.

Blonde hair and blue eyes, white skin, a Caucasian beauty. Marie

is like the grownup version of Odin's daughter Bella.

I'm sure when Bella grows up she'll be just as beautiful. Perhaps that's why Odin takes after Marie as if she were his own daughter.

I got Marie untangled and looked around my house.

I went to my room and in my king size bed was mom, sis, and Hyun-ji, tangled and sleeping.

And in the kitchen.....

"Miss Ji-hye?"

"You are awake?"

For a second I was suspicious of what I saw.

Cha Ji-hye was wearing an apron and cooking, the scene was that shocking to see.

Such a feminine vision of Cha Ji-hye, this was my first time seeing it.

"You know how to cook?"

"I've lived alone all my life, of course."

Well, that makes sense too.

It's just so unexpected that seeing Cha Ji-hye cooking looked new.

Without really thinking about it I sat down at the table and watched her cook.

Cha Ji-hye didn't pay attention to me sitting there and continued with her cooking.

She prepared bean curd soup with tofu in it and bean sprout soup good for alcohol recovery without any hesitation.

"Go ahead and call your family to the table."

"Yes."

I woke up my family and brought them into the kitchen. The

three woman with shabby faces and eyes only half open made it to a sitting position at the table.

“Did you make all this, hon?”

“Yes, mother.”

“Let’s see how it tastes.”

Mom picked up her spoon first and had a taste of the bean sprout soup. Then she looked satisfied and nodded her head.

“It’s really good. I think you can come get married, honey.”

“I won’t marry.”

“Huh.....”

At the unhesitating reproach towards mom’s flirtation, it hurt her.

The legendary ice queen noona too looked a bit hurt at Cha Ji-hye’s brazen answers.

Hyun-ji went from gazing at the strong personalities in the room, between mom and sis and even Cha Ji-hye. You should just get a job.

The meal was tasty.

A plain meal for an average family. After breaking up with Min-jeong, it had been a long time since I had a home cooked meal like this.

After the meal, mom and noona and Hyun-ji left the house.

“Son, be well. I’ll come by again so even if you miss me, stay strong.”

“Ok, I’ll probably cry because I want to see you so bad. Next time you come, bring lots of banchan.”

“Ok, ok. Be well you too honey.”

“Yes, have a safe trip back, mother.”

“And think about the marriage thing.”

“No marriage.”

“Huk!” (Gasp)

Mom was hurt once more as she left.

Like that, a typhoon passed.

Afterwards for exercise, I sparred with Marie.

Marie, like always, moved deftly going front, back, left, and right without restriction, keeping me on my toes.

With the physical strength buff intermediate level 5 and reflex superior level 1 plus the superior spirit summons that gave me the power of nature, I couldn't help but barely chase after Marie's coattails.

Marie's incredibly irregular attacks, it's too hard to follow them.

Like a predator, Marie moved instantly out of my sight. Her movements were too much.

She doesn't use standard fighting methods but I'm overcome trying to just defend and evade, that's all I can manage in this situation.

‘But in theory, there's no reason for me to lose.’

Physical strength buff intermediate level 5.

Reflex superior level 1.

Spirit summons superior level 1.

Even if I were to argue it in terms of karma points I think I would far surpass Marie. I got the idea that she hadn't raised her main skill, aura control, to superior yet.

I had no idea why I kept losing so I asked Cha Ji-hye for her opinion.

Cha Ji-hye actually answered it very easily.



“It’s dynamic visual acuity.”

“Dynamic visual acuity?”

“From what I can tell, Miss Johanna has incredible dynamic visual acuity. Beyond the level of battle, it’s much more developed.”

“Is dynamic visual acuity that important?”

“Saying that someone has good dynamic visual acuity, it means that basically in the blink of an eye, she can take in more information and decide what to do in the same amount of time than you can. Does it make sense if I say time moves more slowly for her?”

“Ah!”

“The martial artists that we call geniuses have that ability. Other things can be improved with training but there is a limit to it with dynamic visual acuity.”

“Then that means by skill I’m not deficient?”

“Yes, your movement itself has developed well and is very impressive. By skill, I think your reflexes are very good.”

“Then is there no skill that can improve my dynamic visual acuity?”

I still have 1,500 karma left.

I hadn’t use it just in case but I thought that if I can I should use it for the visual acuity.

If fighting with Marie is like this, how will it be with Lee Chang-wee?

He’s the strongest opponent in China, world class Lee Chang-wee.

Before he became an opponent he was already a martial arts master, he’ll be a much harder opponent.

“There is an assist skill that can improve your vision but as I understand it, it doesn’t work on dynamic visual acuity.”

“There’s an assist skill that strengthens vision?”

“A vision buff. Examinees with poor eyesight sometimes use them.”

Vision buff, you say.....

Instantly I thought of the special skill that’s like a cheat, the skill synthesis.

I got the reflex skill too by combining the physical strength buff and guider skill together.

So if I take this assist skill called vision assist with the guider skill, wouldn’t that create a dynamic visual acuity?

After thinking about it, I summoned my board and said.

“Show me vision buff skill.”

Then the words on the board began to wiggle.

-Vision buff (assist skill): strengthens vision.

\*Entry level 1: vision 1.0 (-100)

-Remaining karma: +1,500

‘Vision 1.0 eh.’

My eyesight left and right were at 0.5 and 0.4, I guess I won’t be needing glasses.

In many ways it looks alright.

With 100 karma I decided to get the vision buff.

“Skill synthesis.”

-Please select the skills or items you wish to synthesize.

1. Skills available for synthesis: spirit summons (Sylph), spirit summons (Kasa), physical buffer, guider, teleport, vision buff
2. Items available for synthesis: AW50F, Neilson H2 (quantity 2), 357 magnum (quantity

5).

\*Items used for synthesis will be deleted.

I'll have to try them all in order.

-Synthesizing spirit summons (Sylph) and vision buff (assist skill).

-Synthesis failed.

-Synthesizing spirit summons (Kasa) with vision buff (assist skill).

-Synthesis failed.

-Synthesizing physical strength buff (assist skill) and vision buff (assist skill).

-Synthesis failed.

Three consecutive fails.

But of course for this I wasn't expecting much. The important stuff came next.

"I'll synthesize the guider and vision buff."

-Synthesizing guider (assist skill) with vision buff (assist skill).

'Please! Please!'

I prayed. Then,

Pat!

A light spurted out of the board. This was the reaction of success.

Then the skill appeared on the board.

-Synthesis successful. You have achieved dynamic visual acuity (synthesis skill).

-Dynamic visual acuity (synthesis skill): able to see a quickly moving object well.

\*Entry level 1

‘Yes!’

I rejoiced inside. Because I got exactly what I needed.

Having completed my original goal I went on and tried to synthesize the vision buff with other skills.

“I’ll synthesize the teleport with vision buff.”

-Synthesizing guider (assist skill) with vision buff (assist skill).

Pat!

Another light spurt from the board. Could it be?

-Synthesis successful. See-through (synthesis skill) has been achieved.

-See through: able to see something behind an obstruction. Activated when you say ‘see-through.’

\*Entry level 1: effect 3 seconds, cool time 60 minutes ‘Wow.’

This too was a skill I needed. It’ll be very useful to see hidden enemies behind walls.

Especially because the anti-material rifle AW50F has the ability to shoot through walls and kill an enemy, I looked forward to using the two skills together.

‘Well then, I’ve tried synthesizing all the skill together now. Should I try it with the items now?’

Amongst my items I had five magnum 357s left.

They were left over from the itemizations I did for shooting, ammo revision, and reload synthesis.

I’m really curious. If I combine this bullet and the vision buff?

I decided to give it a try. I wouldn’t really be losing anything if I fail.

“I’ll synthesize vision buff and magnum bullet.”

Then.....

## Chapter 126 – Synthesis (Part 2)

---

-Synthesis successful. Foresight (Synthesis skill) has been unlocked.

-One magnum 357 bullet has been used.

-Foresight (synthesis skill): sense an enemy's long distance attack before it reaches you.

Seeing how there was no level listed, this must be like the reload skill in that it's a skill with a level I cannot raise.

‘What a fun skill.’

Being able to anticipate an enemy's long distance attack.

Then when someone is trying to attack me, I'll be able to track that trajectory and see it coming.

‘Huh? Isn't this too good of a skill to be true?’

An enemy in hiding, that I can't see, preparing to attack with a weapon from far away, that's a scary thing.

That's exactly the kind of person I am!

In that last 7th exam, with cheat like shooting skills, I was able to murder 6 corrupt examinees!

Not knowing when or how I will attack or even with what weapon kind of weapon I was using, they had no choice but to die a futile death at my hands.

On the other hand, I could also be in the same kind of danger. Even though there aren't really any guns in the Arena, there were still arrows and magic or someone who throws daggers like Marie.

With that in mind, this foresight skill was an incredible defense mechanism.

If someone who was hiding far away tried to attack with a weapon, foresight would appear. I could be aware of it and run

away or avoid it.

“Show me all my skills.”

-Showing all skills obtained by examinee Kim Hyun-ho.

-Main skill: spirit summons (superior level 1).

-Assist skill: physical strength buff (intermediate level 5), guider (entry level 1), teleport (intermediate level 1), vision buff (entry level 1).

-Specialty skill: synthesis skill

-Synthesis skill: Divine Protection of the Wind (master), Divine Protection of Fire (entry level 1), reflex (superior level 1), flame of life (intermediate level 4), penetrate (entry level 1), virtual space (intermediate level 1), shooting (entry level 1), bullet revision (master), reload, dynamic visual acuity (entry level 1), see-through (entry level 1), foresight.

-Remaining karma: +1,400

I was satisfied with myself.

I used 1,300 karma to raise my dynamic visual acuity to intermediate level 1.

And the remaining 100 karma I left alone.

“Miss Marie!”

“Yeah!”

“Let’s spar again. It’ll be different this time.”

“Okay, let’s play.”

To her it seems our sparring sessions are nothing more than playing a game of tag.

Marie, without hesitation, started attacking.

She didn’t come in at once, she staggered her approach and her strange rhythm flustered me.

‘It was always like this which is why I couldn’t get the right timing of it.’

Since I couldn’t get the timing right to go in, I couldn’t help but naturally be led on by her.

But this time it was different.

Boong!

I thought she stopped for a moment but in an instant she was at my chin and threw a punch.

The punch flew in like some bullet.

But I dodged my head to the side. At the same time, with my hand I grabbed her nape.

“.....!”

Surprised, Marie did a somersault in place in the air, and shook off my hand. As swift as a swallow.

Marie put some distance between the two of us, thought something was weird and shook her head to the side, then attacked once more.

Pa pa pat!

Left, right, left, right, with a zigzag step, I almost saw a double of her.

But I knew before it happened that her kick was coming from the right.

The intermediate level 1 foresight has given me some time to react.

By the split of a hair, I could see the initial movement of Marie’s attack so I was prepared for and was able to defend myself.

It was like Cha Ji-hye said, time moving more slowly.

In a short time I could see more and can even think about how I needed to act.

After just dodging, I counter attacked with some left jabs.

Fighting back with jabs and slowly inching forward, I decreased the distance between us and I effectively disrupted Marie's flow of movement.

The sparring eventually finished in a tie.

"It's not fun anymore."

Marie complained and pouted her lips.

She can't easily just win the game now so of course it's not fun.

But on the other hand I was very satisfied.

With the effect of that raised dynamic visual acuity intermediate level 1 skill, I was able to see the results right away that's why I could feel satisfied.

After that we had a simple day.

After we woke up and had breakfast, I sparred with Marie, then Cha Ji-hye in turns.

Nearly all of the house chores were done by Cha Ji-hye.

Atypical of her.

She was good at buying groceries and cooking. She even used the oven to bake bread and cookies.

'Did she get some cooking skill?'

It was enough to warrant such suspicion. It's a skill very unlike her usual image.

"Um, should I employ a maid?"

"There is no need."

"This must be a lot of work for you though."

"It's not at all."

"But I still feel bad."



“I like to cook.”

“That’s unexpected.”

“That is rude.”

“Oh, right, sorry.”

I broke out in a cold sweat and Cha Ji-hye gave me an ambiguous smile for a split second.

“I didn’t like it originally, but now that there’s more mouths to feed, it’s gratifying.”

With perfect timing, Marie ran into the kitchen and shouted.

“Make me macarons!”

“It is almost mealtime.”

“I don’t want rice! Macarons!”

Throwing a tantrum like a child.

“Would you like to eat 3 macarons or eat a meal and then eat 6 macarons?”

For a moment, Marie became indecisive and looked like a plotting monkey.

“Food and then 6 macarons.....”

“Okay then.”

Marie looked like she had been tricked as she walked out of the kitchen.

“You’re good with kids.”

“When I was at the orphanage, there were more than a few kids.”

“Ah..... You must have went through a lot.”

“Not really. After I learned Muay Thai, everyone listened very well.”

“.....”

I wondered what the connection between Muay Thai and watching kids well was but I got scared. She might have been born a soldier.

Anyway, we spent our days quite peacefully.

\*\*\*

Lee Chang-wee was berated day after day and was not in a good mood. The communist party cadre was fretting.

An examinee with the skill to cure any disease!

After it became widespread that Chairman Park Jin-seong recovered, they all came to Lee Chang-wee and grilled him.

“Quickly deliver that examinee to me.”

“He is an individual necessary to the future of China!”

It’s not that Lee Chang-wee didn’t know their true motives.

The old party executives were, more than anything, trying their best to preserve their own lives.

With substantial power and money, with so much at stake, the thing they were most greedy for was more life.

‘They think Kim Hyun-ho can deliver them eternal life? Those lazy pigs don’t even exercise.’

They can’t even fix their own habits and waddle around pretending to do Tai Chi. Every time he saw them he wanted to beat them to death.

Lee Chang-wee himself didn’t have his own righteous reasons but getting orders from a group who he didn’t have an ounce of respect for made him quite unhappy.

Getting orders to do this or that from those insects whose skulls he could crack in two with one hand. It made him angry every single time.

How was it that he was being ordered around by those that

weren't the strongest?

‘For the sake of giving Chinese examinees a pillar of support, I aligned himself with them, but I have no intention of being a pawn forever.’

Lee Chang-wee was growing his power and waiting for the right time.

Lee Chang-wee was waiting patiently to upturn the current power structure and climb atop it.

‘But for now I have to kneel.’

Even if it isn't the party's commands, he has to take care of Kim Hyun-ho.

He's grown excessively.

His rate of growth was too fast.

To grab him and bring him to China or to cut down the sprout.

Lee Chang-wee went to the Beijing international airport. He got his ticket and was waiting when.

A sudden phone call came on his phone, he took it out.

‘Who is this?’

An unknown number.

He picked it up.

“Who is this?”

-Lee Chang-wee?

A young man's voice spoke out in the Arena language.

“Who is this?”

-Odin.

Lee Chang-wee's eyes grew cold and flat.

“Odin from the Nordic exam group;”

-Yes.

“You caused us some trouble at the Deport docks the other day.”

-I’m not sure about that. We just nabbed some pirates, were there some of your guys amongst them?

“If you don’t know, that’s fine. We can deal with what happens in the Arena while we’re in there.

-Do whatever you want.

“I’m sure you didn’t call just to aggravate me, what is it?”

-I see you’re at the airport right now.

Startled at those words, Lee Chang-wee looked around at his surroundings.

‘Is he watching?’

But Lee Chang-wee replied unfazed.

“And?”

-I don’t suppose the plane you’ll board will head to Korea?

Kim Hyun-ho crossed his mind. He had heard that he had aligned himself with the Nordic exam group.

“And if I am?”

-What do you mean? If you’re going to tour Korea, that isn’t something for me to get involved in. But.....

Odin’s words continued.

-I have a friend with a debt larger than life in Korea, I wanted to ask you to tell them hello on my behalf.

“Hello.....”

Odin’s message was clear.

Don’t touch Kim Hyun-ho.

‘Are you giving me a warning right now? To Lee Chang-wee?’

Lee Chang-wee's eyes suddenly had a violent glint in them.

"I'll let it hang as it is. You've moved up a bit and now you're overconfident. You wish to die? Even if two or three guys like you came at me, do you think you could beat me?"

-I don't think it would take two or three of us.

"Oh? I'd love to see if that's true in the next exam."

-If it is in the Arena, I'm much less scared.

'What does he mean by that?'

The inside of Lee Chang-wee's head became complicated.

Did he gain something that would make him immensely stronger?

Without something like that, he wouldn't dare to be so brazen.

No matter if it was in real life or in the Arena, no matter how famous he was, this was Odin.

'Odin isn't a careless man, why is he being this way?'

-Anyway, I've said it clearly. Do not try to harm a dear friend of the Nordic Exam Group.

Lee Chang-wee roughly hung up the phone.

The rage had passed but unlike that emotion, the inside of his head was cold.

'The Nordic exam Group is going to these lengths to protect Kim Hyun-ho?'

It's not just a personal relationship.

No matter the debt Odin may have, for him to put the Nordic exam group's name on the line and actually call China, he can't do that.

This meant the Nordic exam group had formally decided to protect Kim Hyun-ho, and if so, why?

‘Enough to monitor the hostility between China and Kim Hyun-ho, is he worth that much?’

Something was off.

‘There’s something I don’t know.’

This just cements the fact more that he should go to Korea himself.

The time came and Lee Chang-wee boarded a plane to Incheon.

\*\*\*

A leisurely dinnertime.

I lay on the sofa and watched TV, Marie was playing with the spirits I summoned.

Cha Ji-hye was looking intently at something on the laptop and when I asked she just replies oh its nothing.

We were passing time like this when.

Ring, ring.

My smartphone started to vibrate and Marie suddenly got up.

“Hyun-ho’s phone!”

Then she stole my smartphone and checked the caller ID.

“Who?”

Marie tilted her head.

I took the smartphone back from her and checked and it’s the unknown caller ID sign.

Usually with these its suspicious people.

I went back and forth wondering if I should answer and decided to just take the call.

“Hello?”

-Mr. Kim Hyun-ho?

Suddenly, a young man's voice asked.

I winced.

Because it was in the Arena language.

Who is this?

But seeing as he asked in informal speech, an opponent.

And a young man.....

“Lee Chang-wee?”

-So you know.

## Chapter 127 – Confrontation Part (1)

---

When I said Lee Chang-wee, Cha Ji-hye and Marie stopped what they were doing.

“Why are you calling me?”

He spoke informally first so I replied in kind.

-Let's meet.

“Me meet you?” `

-Yes. `

“I don't want to.”

-Even if you don't want to I have many ways of making you. Don't you think it best if you meet me when I ask?

“.....”

Does he mean he can take a hostage to force me? The Korean Arena Research Agency is on the Chinese side so I'm sure he could quickly find out my family's whereabouts.

-Today will just be conversation.

“Then you come here.”

-What?

“Come to my house. If we're just going to talk, so what. If we meet outside, I'll just be cold and cost money.”

Then Lee Chang-wee laughed.

-Fine. I'll head over.

“Use the intercom. We're no solicitors.”

Lee Chang-wee hung up without a reply.

I said to Cha Ji-hye.

“He's coming here. What will you do?”



“See him together.”

“Will you be alright? The other person is the asshole that killed you. And you still have to hide your identity....”

“I can’t hide myself forever anyway. If they are monitoring you, sooner or later my identity will be found. They might already know even.”

“And Miss Marie?”

“I want to see!”

Marie energetically shouted.

She’s sure good to have around during times like these.

With the three of us together, I think we have a chance at standing up to him.

But still, we prepared for the worst.

I took out three synthetic muscle suits from the space bag.

We changed into the suits.

Then I gave Sylph and Kasa the AW50F and told them to prepare to shoot from the rooftop on the building across from us.

When all the preparations were done, Lee Chang-wee arrived.

I undid the locks on my door and quickly stepped back to give him space. Just in case he tries to suddenly attack.

Keek – (creaking noise)

Lee Chang-wee opened the door and appeared.

Lee Chang-wee looked straight at me, sized me up, and smirked.

“You really don’t know how to treat guests. You should have properly opened the door and welcomed me.”

“Depends on the guest.”

Lee Chang-wee walked inside and was flustered when he saw Cha Ji-hye in the hall.

“You?”

Cha Ji-hye didn't say a word to Lee Chang-wee, she just stared at him.

She stood up to the man that murdered her.

Despite that, I couldn't see fear or rage, she maintained her neutral face and her calm amazed me.

“Ha ha ha! Did you become an examinee because I killed you? What incredible coincidence!”

“You threw my body into the sea.”

Said Cha Ji-hye placidly. Lee Chang-wee gave a refreshing laugh.

“Ha ha, I did, I did! My underlings tied a rock to you and threw you in. When you returned from your exam, were you not in the ocean?”

“It was the seashore. And my wallet and car keys had been taken.”

“Tsk tsk, they're rather vulgar fellows. I'm sorry about that. I'll pay you back for it.”

Lee Chang-wee randomly summoned his item bag and from within, withdrew a bar of gold.

“This should be enough.”

“It's plenty.”

Then in silence, Cha Ji-hye took the gold bar.

Whether Lee Chang-wee having all this fun or Cha Ji-hye as if it's nothing at all, it couldn't be stranger.

Lee Chang-wee, brazen as he was, sat himself comfortably on the sofa.

Right about now, Sylph should be aiming at his head.

“You came because you had something to say?”

I asked.

“Just this morning I was thinking whether I should just kill you or half kill you and take you with me.”

He sure says it without trouble in front of the person he means that about. He’s saying he’s the stronger one.

“Want to give it a go?”

“Haha, I kind of want to but I had a change of thought.”

“.....?”

“You’re a 7th turn examinee now?”

“I am.”

“For a mere 7th turn examinee, you’ve become too strong. Your progress is so fast its kind of weird. And I get the sense that the Nordic exam group is protecting you.”

“.....”

“Odin basically gave me a warning call to protect you, which makes me think its not just because of your treatment skill.”

Lee Chang-wee’s snake-like eyes stared at me.

The virtual space.

If he knew of my ability to store electronics, what kind of reaction would he have?

Of course, I have no intention of telling him.

“So, what are you saying you’ll do?”

“I’ll give you an offer.”

“What offer?”

I scowled.

Since he can’t solve it with strength, he’s trying to make a play with something and reconcile with good words.

Lee Chang-wee looked at Cha Ji-hye and Marie contentiously.

“Can we talk in private, just the two of us?”

“We can. Sylph!”

-Meow.

From the opposite building's rooftop, Sylph is now in front of me.

“Put up a sound barrier so just the two of us can talk.”

-Meow.

Sylph used her power. A strand of wind encompassed me and Lee Chang-wee.

“Go ahead.”

“That's neat.”

Lee Chang-wee looked at Sylph. Sylph yawned atop my shoulder.

“Now talk.”

“Let's work together.”

“What?”

I was instantly flustered. What now? Work together?

“You don't think we've come too far for that?”

“I don't think we've come far at all. The only ones who lost are us Chinese, I don't think you've lost anything.”

“You killed Cha Ji-hye!”

I said in anger.

How can they treat human life so lightly?

“But in the end, she's still alive. And you've gained a lot of karma and grown stronger. Haven't you raised your spirit summon to superior by now? I think you must have.”

“.....”

“So let’s stop arguing about the past and think about how we can benefit one another.”

“I don’t trust China.”

They tried to kidnap me.

They do all sorts of horrible things in the Arena to make money, I can’t forgive such.

“China? When did I ask you to work with China?”

“What do you mean?”

“Not China. Work with ME.”

I was surprised, I looked at Lee Chang-wee.

Lee Chang-wee laughed coldly.

“Have you not thought about it this way before? How can you be so strong and still take orders from others? If you just made up your mind, you could kill the most powerful person in this country any second.”

“Coupe d’état?”

“That’s different. I’m just saying, let’s change the power ladder so it’s a true reflection of strength.”

“Crazy.....”

“An examinee always risks his life to return from the Arena. Despite that, they get orders from those in power and the capitalist class and are used to make money. Isn’t that crazier?”

“So? You want to hold hands and crumble a nation?”

“It’s not that grand an idea.”

Lee Chang-wee continued talking.

“The Chinese communist party leaders see us examinees as a valuable income source, but they also fear us.”

Of course.

Examinees, if they want, could kill hundreds and thousands. They're beasts.

In the eyes of the powerful that shape nations, controlling examinees is as important as anything.

To try and block the kinds of guys like Lee Chang-wee who have these thoughts.

"They have made me the one responsible for all the examinees, and as another examinee to contest with other examinees."

"A faction."

"They're making two groups of examinees so that they keep each other in check, so nobody has time to try anything else."

"....."

"There is the method of kidnapping family members that we use, and that is the most used way we control them."

"So, you're asking me to get rid of the opposing faction of yours?"

"You understand quick."

"And what is it I'll gain from this?"

"I'll give you lots of information so that you can kill them easily in the Arena. Most of them are corrupt examinees so the more you kill, the stronger you'll become."

"And?"

"I'll make it so you are no longer threatened by the Chinese examinees. If you want, I'll get rid of Chief Kim Joong-tae too."

That one does entice me.

But my answer was decided from the beginning.

"Then?"

"What do you mean?"

“So I get rid of the faction that opposes you and you assume power. After that, what are you going to do.”

“Well, what else? Work hard making money, basically living as I do now.”

I smiled cynically at his answer.

“I knew you’d say that. Of course, I reject your proposal.”

“That’s a dumb decision. It’ll be a huge benefit to you and you’re going to refuse it? Purely based on the fact we have different values?”

“No. It’s based on a completely realistic reason.”

I continued to speak at Lee Chang-wee, who was surprised at my response.

“I’m sure you guys will try everything to prevent the clearing of the exams. Like last time if I try to complete my missions, you guys will definitely come at me again.”

I continued to speak.

“Thankfully, right now, you guys are torn amongst yourselves and your heads are leaders that don’t really know anything about the Arena. But if I let everyone be under your sole command, how much stronger will you get? And.....”

I grit my teeth and said.

“Does it seem stupid to you that I could refuse an offer over different values? I don’t want to associate myself with people like you who do shitty things.”

I don’t want to be linked with people who kill for money. There is a certain respect you must have for others as a human.

“.... So you are saying you will not work with me?”

Lee Chang-wee’s voice turned dreary.

I tried my hardest not to get scared.

“That’s right.”

“Then our conversation is over.”

That moment, an immense aura emanated from Lee Chang-wee’s body. The speed with which he raised his aura was super-fast.

I too quickly shouted out.

“Sylph, fusion!”

-Meow!

Sylph jumped into my body.

Lee Chang-wee jumped up from the sofa and extended the knife in his hand at me. Surprisingly the aura was in the knife too.

But I didn’t stay still.

“Divine Protection of the Wind!”

After releasing the Divine Protection of the Wind, I raised a whirlwind and wrapped it around myself.

The wind countered his daggers.

Kuang! (crash)

With loud crashing sounds, Lee Chang-wee was thrown backwards.

Spirit summons superior level 1. And the mastered Divine Protection of the Wind, a whirlwind that was three times stronger than before.

He may be Lee Chang-wee, but he attacked with his bare body so no way he didn’t get flung away.

But Lee Chang-wee wasn’t some average guy.

He stepped on the sofa and regained his balance, and I had no idea when he summoned that thing but in Lee Chang-wee’s right hand there was a long sword!

Pa a at!



And from that long sword, an aura blade extended out!

Marie and Cha Ji-hye had approached and were now on either side of me.

Lee Chang-wee and the three of us, we all looked at each other in our confrontation.

Lee Chang-wee, whose eyes seemed as if they were without feeling, moved his gaze past each of us.

Holding his aura blade down at his side, Lee Chang-wee walked over to the door.

We made way for him.

“I’ll see you in the Arena. I think that’ll be best.”

“It doesn’t matter when or where.”

I replied.

Lee Chang-wee smirked and with scarily predatory eyes, stared at me.

He got rid of his aura blade as he opened the door and left.

“Whew.”

Only now did I get rid of the fusion and send Sylph back and breathed a sigh of relief.

“I’m sure he didn’t intend to fight today from the get go.”

Said Cha Ji-hye.

“If examinees fight in a heavily populated building and cause a situation, even though the Korean Arena Research Agency is friendly with the Chinese, there is a limit to what they will accept.”

“So he just wanted to instill fear.”

“He wanted to see how you’d react.”

At Cha Ji-hye’s opinion, I nodded my head.

He wanted to see if I'd be scared or if I would stand against him.  
That's why I stood.

But honestly, I was really scared.

# Chapter 128 – Confrontation (Part 2)

---

The rest period was approaching its end.

As the exam neared, we returned to the Nordic exam group headquarters in Denmark.

When the exam starts, our bodies in real life would in a sleeping state, but there was the danger that we could be attacked during that time.

At the Nordic exam headquarters, we slowly began exam preparations, when the person in charge of the research center, Vilhelm, came and gave me something.

Two radio transmitter-receivers and 10 communicators.\*

(TN: Walkie-talkies is my best guess on what communicators means.) I looked at them and asked.

“Odin?”

Vilhelm must have understood what I meant by it because he nodded.

It means I should take them to the Arena and give them to Odin.

‘Eh, no problem.’

The wider the communications net, the more I benefit from it as well.

The better we are able to communicate, the faster and easier getting information from my friendly Nordic exam group’s examinees will be.

And when I need help, I could call for help too.

\*\*\*

“Welcome! It is your long-anticipated exam time.”

The baby angel obnoxiously flew about and greeted us.

“Board summons.”

Sharp as a knife, Cha Ji-hye.

Without even trying to pay attention or listen to the baby angel, she immediately summoned her board and checked out the mission.

I should look too.

I summoned my board too and checked it out.

-Name: Kim Hyun-ho

-Class: 33

-Karma: +100

-Mission: block the pirate attack

-Time limit: unlimited

I glanced over at Cha Ji-hye.

“It looks like the pirates are going to attack again.”

Seeing Cha Ji-hye’s calm demeanor calmed me down too.

“Perhaps they are trying to recoup last times failure.”

The pirates were chased off by Odin, and the corrupt examinees that were amongst them were finished by me.

Should we assume that the movement of the pirates was influenced by the corrupt examinees from China?

They weren’t able to collect their majeong the last time so they’re trying to fix that. In addition.

“The Chinese are trying to get revenge on us.”

Said Cha Ji-hye.

I nodded my head.

“They’ll invade the harbor with the pirates and try to kill us.”

And there was a high chance that Lee Chang-wee will be among

them.

Why?

Because of Odin.

If Odin stops their invasion this time too, the only one who could eliminate such a strong opponent would be Lee Chang-wee.

“They’re too much. The one who calls himself the consular will once again try to use his army to aid the pirates.

Without the defense of the army, how were they to stop the pirate invasion?

“Oh boy, this one sounds messy.”

Said the baby angel in a mocking tone.

“Are you teasing someone right now?”

“Yes.”

“Ku ak! You piece of crap!”

Tang tang – tang –

I summoned my double hand guns and fired shot after shot but the baby angel annoyingly dodged casually just flitting here and there.

Because of the shooting skill, I had a 100% accuracy within 10 meters, but I couldn’t hit the baby angel.

Maybe it’s because he’s an angel.

“Calm down, calm down. Don’t waste your bullets.”

“You bastard! We’re only now on the 8th exam! And this is the mission you give us?”

There could be some corrupt examinees from the Chinese examinee group amongst the pirates.

Taking such things into account, this mission level was too hard for us.

“What do you mean. Have you had an impossible mission given to you before?”

“.....”

No. Since we cleared them all so far.

“How is it that examinee Kim Hyun-ho keeps getting all these opportunities to quickly get stronger? Don’t you think it’s because there’s something that will be asked of you?”

“..... I suppose.”

“The difficulty is just right. It hasn’t been wrong once.”

Having finished talking, the baby angel waved his hand as if to shoo away a fly.

“Now now, stop whining and be on your way.”

Shook! (swish)

The exam door suddenly appeared.

I guess the exam should be alright, but there’s definitely something irksome about how that baby angel talks! He’s ruining the examinee’s condition before even entering the mission!

Cha Ji-hye opened the door first and went through, I stared down the baby angel and then followed suit.

With his smug face, he waved at me.

\*\*\*

“You have come.”

Odin was waiting for us.

“Odin, what is your mission?”

“As expected. I have to return home and spread the word about the black magic organization.”

‘I had expected that but still.....,’

I had a bad feeling about this.

If Odin left, the work of stopping the pirates' invasion would become that much harder.

“What about you two?”

“We have to stop the pirate invasion.”

“Just you two?”

“I know.”

“Hm, that complicates things. Since the deport harbor's consular looks like he's mixed in with the pirates.”

Consular Adsel, was it?

That vulgar bald man, he will time it so that he leads the soldiers away somewhere when the pirates invade.

Then, in a defenseless situation, how are Cha Ji-hye and I supposed to protect the harbor?

And then.

“Hyun-ho-!”

A familiar voice came from atop the hill.

Pat!

“Kuk!”

Marie jumped out from the bushes and into my arms. In no time she was hanging onto my neck like a koala.

“Marie, what's your mission?”

Asked Odin.

With a peeved face, Marie said.

“Guard Odin.”

“Guard? Me?”

Marie nodded her head.

I could see why that would be her mission.

“Odin, when you try to spread the word, that organization will try to get rid of you. I think it’s Marie job to stop that then.”

Odin nodded at my words.

“I think so too. Anyway, this exam too won’t be as easy as we hoped.”

“What about you Hyun-ho?”

Asked Marie. I told her our mission.

Marie looked upset that we have to part ways.

Having come back into the Deport harbor, we spent a day in the inn we had previously stayed in.

The next day, Odin and Marie left for their exam.

“I wish I could stay a while and help, but my mission has a time limit.”

“Yes, go on and hurry then. We’ll do our best over on this end.”

I gave Odin the synthetic muscle suit, two transceiver-receivers, and 10 walkie talkies that I had stored.

“Be strong.”

“Yes, you too, Odin.”

“Hyun-ho see you later!”

Marie waved her hand at me, on the verge of tears.

I gave her a big smile and pat her on the head.

At least she is able to differentiate between what is important and what isn’t and she didn’t resist on leaving. Who knows, maybe her mind is starting to recover.

“Now, let’s figure out a way to block the pirates.”

“Okay.”

We discussed while we had our meal.



“Basically, it is impossible for just the two of us to fight a pirate mob. The power difference is clear there.”

“You’re right. I don’t think they gave us this exam just to have us haphazardly fight them all.”

I remembered when I fought on the Brown Mountain with the elves.

The ones that fought the undead horde was the elves.

I just helped the elves get stronger and gave them strategies and ideas to help them fight.

I think this mission will be the same.

“Shall we take a more radical approach this time?”

I was curious at what Cha Ji-hye just said.

“What are you thinking?”

“The army won’t just leave if the consular is dead.”

“Ah.....!”

It was indeed a radical approach.

But an absolutely doable strategy.

If I got rid of the consular Adsel, then without the consular orders, the army won’t just move elsewhere.

“The attack has to happen on the day the army is scheduled to leave the harbor.”

Cha Ji-hye’s explanation continued. The day Adsel tries to leave the harbor with the army will be the same day the pirates will attack.

At that time I’ll kill consular Adsel and the army would lose its reason to leave the harbor.

When everyone knows their commander was murdered, how could the army think of leaving?

Then there will be no choice but for the army and pirates to fight.

“If consul Adsel is murdered first, the army will need to make up another excuse to leave or the pirates will find out and push back the attack date.”

Not only consul Adsel, there was a high chance that there are pirate spies in the army.

“That is true. For now, let’s plan on doing it this way.”

Now the big problem was how we’ll repel the pirates.

We can’t really rely on the army here.

An army that can’t even properly protect the harbor, I don’t think they’ll be able to handle the pirates.

On top of that there would be corrupt examines mixed in with the pirates.

“Wouldn’t it be better to fight them on the water instead of on land?”

I asked.

If we fight on water, there was less chance of close quarter combat than on land.

If everyone fought far apart, there would be more chances for me to use my sniper rifle.

“That makes sense. But for a battle at sea, the army here has to board military ships and go out to the pirates.”

Hm.

This crappy army is yet again the problem.

We put our heads to work and fell deep in thought. How can we send the army out to sea and make them fight the pirates?

Then Cha Ji-hye opened her mouth.

“I don’t think all the soldiers are rotten.”

“I don’t think so either. There must be some with their head on straight.....”

“What if that someone became the ultimate leader of the Deport harbor?”

I got what Cha Ji-hye was saying.

“And kill everyone above him.”

“Yes, with your skills, I don’t think it’ll be that hard.”

I thought it over for a moment.

Amongst the superior officers in this army, there must be a general with responsibility, a proper soldier who wants to protect the people from the pirates.

Find that person, kill everyone above him, make him the one in charge.....

Then at the very least, it’ll simplify going up against the pirates.

If he took the battle out at sea, even if Lee Chang-wee was the opponent, I still felt confident.

Even if he could fly and crawl, how will he dodge a sniper’s bullet?

I nodded as I said.

“Let’s do that.”

“First let’s gather some information.”

We finished our meal and called the inn owner over.

“How was your meal?”

The owner of an inn that served royalty. He had nice clothes and a gentle speech.

“It was fine. I have something to ask you though.”

I cringed but I spoke with a noble dialect.

“Of course, ask me anything.”

“There was that pirate attack recently.”

“There was.”

The inn owner’s face turned gloomy.

“What was this here army doing?”

“Useless. They went to suppress monsters or whatnot, they were probably just trying to escape far away.”

Said the inn owner sarcastically.

As expected, the people thought poorly of the consul and his army.

“How could they, so it’s safe to say they are in bed with the pirates then.”

The inn owner looked around then secretively said in a quiet voice.

“That is an open secret here. Nobles in bed with pirates, it’s not just a few in this country and that’s no secret.”

He knows I came with Odin from a foreign country, so the owner told me honestly and without hesitation.

“That is ludicrous. Then is there not a single proper soldier in this army?”

I asked.

The inn owner replied.

“Why wouldn’t there be? Some rotten fruit doesn’t doom the whole tree.”

“There is someone then?”

I asked.

“There is someone who has the respect of all. He stayed behind during the last attack and he’s the one who ordered the

evacuation.”

# Chapter 129 – Regiment Commander Ajen

## (Part 1)

---

The deport harbor's army was split into two regiments and one leader amongst them was someone named Decker, who was the one the inn owner was talking about.

“If we didn't have him, there wouldn't be a single person left alive in this harbor.”

He put out the order for people to evacuate, and when the chaos subdues, he commands the troops and leads the way in recovery and restoration.

The owner complimented the regiment commander for a long time before leaving.

“What do you think?”

“I think we need to gather more information.”

Said Cha Ji-hye.

“The power between the two regiments, the last pirate attack and their frequency of attack, we have to investigate them. We cannot grasp who this regiment commander Decker is just based on rumors.”

“I think so too.”

We couldn't just rely on rumors.

In the last pirate invasion they did say there was an evacuation order, but despite that, the civilian casualties wasn't small.

The pirates would always come in from the sea, so if they had scouted more, wouldn't they have known earlier and been able to put out an evacuation order?

I went out to the street with Cha Ji-hye and gathered more information.

I discovered a woman, together with a boy that looked to be about five years old. They looked like mother and son.

The woman was deep in worry. The boy, sucking his finger, devoid of energy, was just a pile on the floor.

‘Should I give them something to eat?’

Feeling pity, I went to get some large breads from a nearby bakery.

After the panic of the attack, the bread didn’t look that good, but it couldn’t be helped.

“I have something to ask you.”

I said to the woman.

She looked younger than me, but it felt awkward to talk informally when I’d just met her.

But I was a noble here, so I needed to behave like one.

“Yes.....!”

Surprised, the woman bowed as deep as she could.

First, I handed her the bag of bread.

“Oh, thank you!”

The surprised woman took the bag of bread. The boy, with sparkling eyes, stared at the bread.

“When else were you attacked by pirates?”

“Three years ago in the summer was when the pirates attacked.”

“Summer, three years ago?”

“Yes, I remember because that’s when my boy had just started walking.”

3 years, she said.

‘I suppose if attacks like this happened every year that it would be impossible for people to live here.’

Those pirate bastards must have brains too. It looks like they changed their targets every year and switched around where they attacked. Since, if people don't live there, plundering would be impossible.

“Tell me exactly what happened then.”

“Yes, that day.....”

The woman tried her best to tell me about the attack three years ago.

There was one thing different from this last attack.

“Regiment commander Ajen took out the fleet but suffered a crushing defeat so he was unable to stop the pirates.”

“Regiment commander Ajen?”

“Yes, if he hadn't lost all his men he could've stopped the pirates..... the tactic was brash and he wasn't able to save anyone with it.”

After this, I continued to investigate around and everyone complimented regiment commander Decker while regiment commander Ajen was only reproached for his incompetence.

“Tsk, it was strange. That Ajen, he was very strong and tough. He was a brave sailor. Who knew he'd lose to the pirates so effortlessly.”

That was what an old fisherman said.

I used Sylph to scan the harbor. There were only 13 ships left now. I heard they worked hard to restore these.

‘It's impossible to fight the pirates with just these?’

I'm not general [Yi Sun-shin](#).....

We returned to the inn and organized our information.

“From a military standpoint, the overwhelming naval defeat of regiment commander Ajen three years ago was a turning point.



After that, the pirates had a wide net of activity and began to act freely.”

Said Cha Ji-hye.

“Having lost the means to protect its waters, no matter when the Deport harbor is attacked from pirates, it is just seen now as normal.”

“We have to find out more about regiment commander Ajen. To see if he was in cahoots with the pirates and lost on purpose or if he actually was trying to eradicate them.”

“One thing for sure is that regiment commander Ajen was the only one to really try to go up against the pirates. On the other hand, this regiment commander Decker that has the respect of the people hasn’t gone into battle even once after he arrived.”

“Now that you mention it, he was deployed here 3 years ago?”

Didn’t seem like it was coincidence.

More so than regiment commander Ajen, this guy is more suspicious.

“What use is it just us talking it over amongst ourselves. Have Sylph watch him.”

If we find regiment commander Ajen and have Sylph watch him for 24 hours, I’m sure something will come up.

\*\*\*

“Tsk tsk, that man is like that again.”

“He’s done nothing well to deserve such leisure.”

“He didn’t show himself at all when the pirates came?”

A small pub near the inn.

A middle-aged man was lying at the table and snoring, being snickered at by others.

In his completely disheveled military uniform.

His hair completely tangled from a lack of brushing.

An empty bottle of alcohol rolling on the table.

A pitiful sight to see, this middle-aged man was regiment commander Ajen.

Having lost the navy in the pirate defeat 3 years ago, he was the culprit of today's tragedy, hated more than the pirates themselves.

This pub was no exception.

The men gathered at the pub with mean stares directed at Ajen, all joining together to slander him.

The slander directed at Ajen gave way to denouncing of the pirates and it all ended with the conclusion that it was the fault of Ajen.

The night grew deeper and as it came time for the pub to close, the owner, with an unsure face, looked at the passed out Ajen.

“Whew, like this again.”

Making a face like this was a familiar occurrence, he picked up Ajen and went out the pub.

He dumped Ajen in front of the door and the owner locked up his pub.

And then one fisherman grandpa appeared. He was old and thin but had strong arms and legs, the stereotypical old fisherman.

“Tsk tsk.”

The old fisherman picked up Ajen who was dumped in front of the pub door.

With a suspicious gaze, the owner who had been locking up looked at them.

“Mister Vincent? Have you come back now?”

“I have.”

“You’re picking up after this fellow again tonight.”

“Be careful how you speak. Calling the regiment commander this fellow.”

Having been told off, the pub owner mumbled to himself.

“It’s because you, mister Vincent, always pick him up after that this fellow, I mean, regiment commander, can let go and just drink till he passes out.”

“Enough. Go on home and rest.”

“Ha, it’s just that I don’t get it. We’re in this position because of him, why do you show him such goodwill.”

The old fisherman Vincent spent his whole life on a boat.

So much time on boats and he never did a single cowardly or distasteful thing, he had the respect of everyone.

The pub owner respected him as well, so he didn’t like that Vincent always took care of regiment commander Ajen and felt it wasn’t right.

Regardless, Vincent picked up regiment commander Ajen and left. And.....

-Meow.

A single slender cat made of wind with brightly shining eyes was watching behind them.

Like that, Vincent put Ajen on his back and walked for a long while.

They arrived at an old shanty.

“Welcome home, ajusshi.”

“Good work. It’s been a long day.”

“Mm, yes.”

Men gather around and welcomed him.

Each and every one of them had big builds and firm muscles. All were fishermen.

It was varied with young men up to middle aged.

Inside the cramped shanty, two candles barely lit the space.

Vincent sat Ajen on a chair and hit him on the shoulders to wake him up.

“Sir regiment commander. Come, wake up now.”

“Hm.....”

Regiment commander Ajen rustled.

After a long time of trying to rouse him, regiment commander barely opened his eyes.

“Ugh, is it already this time?”

“You should moderate how much you drink.”

“It’s not really ‘moderate’ able when it comes to drink.”

All the fisherman laughed out loud.

Regiment commander got his head on straight and sat up.

“Let’s begin. How many have gathered?”

“15 small boaters, but it’s been hard to convince the ships owners so at best we have 5.”

“13 warships, 5 big ships, 15 small fishing boats..... its way short of what we need.....”

The regiment commander was extremely distressed.

“Is it possible to build more warships?”

At Vincent’s question, regiment Commander Ajen shook his head.

“I’ve been completely ignored by the consul. I lost the right to speak three years ago after my defeat. Now it’s difficult just to keep my regiment commander position.”

“Damn!”

“That bastard Adsel.....!”

“How could you be treated this way, regiment Commander Ajen!”

Regiment Commander Ajen shrugged his shoulders.

“Can’t be helped. A defeated general cannot speak.”

“And whose fault was that defeat!”

“All thanks to consul Adsel and regiment Commander Decker! Those two bastards that are in bed with the pirates.....!”

“Shh, be quiet. Do you want to be mistaken for a group that is plotting treason?”

When regiment Commander Ajen gave the warning, only then did the enraged fishermen shut their mouths.

And then.

“Would it be okay if I participated in this conversation?”

The voice of a young man came out from somewhere.

It startled everyone and they all looked around. They couldn’t tell where the voice was coming from.

“Who is it!”

Shouted regiment Commander Ajen.

But this person that they couldn’t locate replied.

“I am in the same boat with you all.”

“..... I don’t know how you found out about this place, but in the least isn’t it common courtesy to reveal yourself while you talk?”

“Of course. I will be there shortly. Please wait 5 minutes.”

“.....?”

Everyone thought this was strange.

If he's close enough to speak to them, why did he say to wait for 5 minutes?

\*\*\*

By using Sylph to listen to their conversation, I was now sure of my conclusion.

The only righteous person was regiment Commander Ajen.

He was the only commander in the Deport harbor who wants to fight the pirates.

“Let's go.”

“Yes.”

I headed to the place they were meeting at together with Cha Ji-hye.

Heading towards the docks, we arrived at a small shanty. I knocked on the door.

Knock, knock, knock.

Despite trying to control my strength, or perhaps it was because of the synthetic muscle suit, or maybe the door was weak to begin with, but it shook.

Kiik (creak), the door opened.

A robust young fisherman, with a cautious gaze, stared at us.

He opened the door and guided us inside but remained on alert and was ready to attack at any moment.

Regardless, we walked in.

Regiment commander Ajen looked us up and down and then said to me.

“I am regiment commander Ajen. Will you introduce yourself as well?”

“I am Baronet Kim of the Count of Wolfenbrooke. You may call

me Kim.”

“Wolfenbrooke..... Odin?”

“Yes, we both serve him.”

“I see. Not long ago, the Count of Wolfenbrooke took care of and dispersed the pirates!”

“Ohh, that Odin?”

“So they are on our side?”

Amongst the chattering atmosphere, one fisherman said.

“That’s right! They were the ones who stayed with the Count of Wolfenbrooke at the inn. I’ve seen them before.”

Only then did regiment Commander Ajen’s hard expression loosen.

“Then I can believe that you have goodwill towards us at least. But it is true I find it hard to admit that a foreign country with which we have no relation wants to help us.”

I smiled.

“There are two reasons. First, the pirates who suffered may retaliate in a rage and we received orders to remain here and protect the town.”

“Ohh!”

“Very Arend hero-like!”

The fishermen rejoiced.

But regiment commander Ajen asked a prudent question at the end.

“And what is the other reason?”

# Chapter 130 – Regiment Commander Ajen

## (Part 2)

---

“Actually, there is a reason we came here with our lord.”

I said.

“Recently, black magicians across the continent have secretly been wreaking all kinds of havoc and performing terrible, depraved acts.”

“Black magicians? Is that true?”

Regiment commander Ajen asked as if taken aback.

“It sounds completely unrelated but honestly, more than any other place, this Deport harbor has the deepest connection to it. As of the last couple years, like the Deport harbor, many other nearby port cities have been attacked, right?”

“Yes. Because of it the west coast cities of Aman kingdom are in states of emergency. But what does that have to do with the black magicians?”

“Because the pirates and black magicians are working together.”

“What, what does that mean?”

“The pirates, in order to accrue wealth and majeong, attacked, and the black magicians wanted lots of bodies.”

“Bodies.... Bodies....!”

Regiment commander Ajen must have remembered something because his eyes opened wide.

“Consul Adsel was always careless when it came to the harbor defenses but wasn’t his cleanup of the aftermath always really quick?”

“Yes. Having received the order from consul Adsel, regiment commander Decker always cleaned up afterwards very quickly. 3



years ago, even the last one....”

“Probably the reason regiment commander Decker is so popular is because of that. He takes care of the aftermath quickly, it moved the people who had to suffer with evacuating.”

“Then all the bodies he gathered don’t go to get cremated but.....”

“The black magicians turn them into the undead and they get used for all sorts of bad things.”

At the shocking truth, regiment commander Ajen and the fishermen couldn’t hide their horrified expressions.

It wasn’t just simple pirate plundering, but instead it attacks were calculated plans to ensure people died.

It was all planned malice.

“Then we have to get the black magicians first!”

Shouted regiment commander Ajen.

I raised my hand and calmed him down.

“The black magicians that were here have already been dealt with.”

“Really?”

“Of course. That’s why we have come out to meet you.”

Regiment commander Ajen stayed silent for a while, then suddenly outstretched his hand to me.

“Welcome.”

I smiled and grabbed his hand.

“Thank you.”

“That’s what we should be saying.”

Just like that Cha Ji-hye and I joined the group.

This group was made by regiment commander Ajen three years

ago after that attack.

“Back then, I first recruited the family members of the soldiers who died at sea and grew it from there. In order to get rid of the pirates we need the help of seamen.”

“I see. Since more than anything we need boats.”

“Exactly. I was defeated and I don’t have the right to say anything. But in order to beat them, there is no other way but through naval warfare. They call themselves pirates but they are actually stronger fighters on land than at sea.”

I’m sure.

Because amongst the cracks of the pirates were the corrupt Chinese examinees.

“In order to get boats to fight the pirates with, you have been recruiting boatmen?”

“In a fight, we wouldn’t stand a chance. Right now all we can do is improve and strengthen our security alert system. More so than encountering the pirates, knowing early on and rapidly evacuating the citizens is what we want.”

There’s truth to that plan.

If experienced boatmen have a scouting system, then it’s totally possible that they can be alerted early to the pirates’ presence.

At the very least, regiment commander Ajen knows how to make realistic strategy plans.

‘This guy is an impressive character.....’

I’d decided and I carefully said.

“Sir regiment commander, do you have the confidence to lead the military if consul and regiment commander Decker disappeared?”

“What are you saying?”

“Exactly what I said. If those two disappear, lead the army and effectively block the landing of the pirates.”

“You, you don’t mean.....”

Everyone’s faces changed.

“Those in cahoots with pirates and helping them kill people, they don’t deserve to live. Isn’t that true?”

“That.....”

“If that happens then at least doesn’t that fulfill your prerequisites to fight the pirates?”

Regiment commander Ajen looked like he had a lot on his mind.

A bit later, he nodded his head.

“It is impossible.”

“Are you saying there is a reason that those two shouldn’t be killed?”

“Not that. No matter how I think of it, there is no way to defeat them on land. Even if I gathered all the military and drafted all the boatmen and gave them all military training, we would be inferior.

“Of course, there is something I’ve been thinking about.”

Regiment commander Ajen looked confused and I explained to him.

“I will go out to sea and disrupt the bastards. I will distract the pirates so that they can’t make it to the deport harbor.”

“There is no way that is possible though. We don’t have enough military strength!”

“I alone will be enough. As long as I have one light and fast boat.”

“Alone? You are saying it’s possible by yourself? Are you as strong as the count of Wolfenbrooke or something?”

“Not as much as him but I have some special skills.”

Then I summoned Sylph.

-Meow.

Sylph appeared atop my shoulder, and was being cute by rubbing her face in mine.

“Huk!”

“What, what is that?”

“A cat, all of a sudden?”

The fishermen were completely surprised.

Regiment commander Ajen looked at Sylph carefully and with a surprised face said.

“A spirit?”

“You can recognize her.”

“Yes, that’s how you heard our conversation and spoke from faraway. With the power of the wind.....”

“You’re right.”

This guy was smarter than I originally thought.

I liked him more.

I pet Sylph and spoke.

“She is a superior wind spirit. Is there someone who doesn’t know how powerful the wind is at sea?”

None of the fisherman could say a word.

There was no way survivors of the harbor wouldn’t know it.

“Aside from this I have several ways I can attack from a long distance. I can aim at them from far away, shatter their sails so they can’t enter the harbor. Just that much is easily possible.”

“Amongst the pirates coming in to attack, if I make it so that a considerable number cannot move on the sea, can you stop the rest that are able to come to land?”

“Yes.”

“Then.....!”

Regiment commander Ajen took out a small piece of paper from his chest. When I opened it I saw a nautical chart.

“According to the direction of the wind and ocean currents, the bastards they will come on this sea route.”

With enthusiasm, he explained his plan.

“From this point here, the ocean current changes. From here you have to ride on the wind, if you break their sails here, you can make it so they can’t move at all.”

“This point here? I don’t know that I’ll be able to find it without going a couple times.”

I expressed my disapproval.

Cha Ji-hye too didn’t have a naval background and knows nearly nothing about the sea.

Then.

“Ride my boat.”

The old fisherman Vincent.

“Vin, Vincent ajusshi!?”

“Ajusshi, I will go instead!”

“Leave it to us.”

The young fishermen stepped up but Vincent firmly raised his hand.

“Stuff like this, an old person who has already lived a long life should go! And are you saying you can steer your boats faster than I can?”

“Well, no, not that but.....”

“But how can we push this task onto you and.....”

The fishermen showed their disapproval.

“Are you sure?”

“I am. As a boatman, if it is to protect our harbor and I die, I’ll have no regrets.”

“We have no intention of dying. Thank you.”

“No, thank you for giving an old man like me this opportunity.”

The old fisherman Vincent, like the protagonist of the sea, grabbed both my hands and bowed.

The young fishermen too and regiment commander Ajen eyes glistened with tears.

It was when the atmosphere was drowned in a sea of emotion that.

“Then we have to come up with some concrete tactical countermeasures to block their landing.”

Cha Ji-hye’s business-like tone broke the atmosphere.

“Ah, yes, that’s right.”

Regiment commander Ajen wiped the tears welled in his eyes and fumbled.

I was holding hands with Vincent and we awkwardly moved away from one another.

I think this woman has some kind of ‘can’t read the atmosphere’ disability.

\*\*\*

From the deport harbor along the seaway, far off to the west.

There was an archipelago of big and small islands.

With shoddy rope bridges between them, each island had several ships docked on its shores.

The pirate army.

It had been a long time since they've forgotten what these island were originally called.

Now it was just the pirates' base that has an evil reputation.

For a long time, pirates had settled here, and not once have they lost a fight on their home turf!

And on this pirate archipelago, one ship leisurely approached.

The ship made its way between the islands and docked at the largest island of them all.

Pat!

Aboard the ship, one human shadow, like a bird, landed on the dock.

“Oh.”

“Now.....”

The group of tens of men who came to greet the ship showed a subdued awe.

But no one was surprised at how he moved.

Because the shadow that came off the ship was Lee Chang-wee.

Being the strongest in China and informally one of the strongest people in the world, such a move couldn't even be called a stunt Lee Chang-wee walked up with confidence.

Amongst the men, one representative, a woman, ran out and bowed her head.

“My apologies for the long voyage.”

With delicate and shining black hair, this attractive woman's respectful greeting even didn't get Lee Chang-wee to soften.

“Where is Heising?”

“Boss, I mean, the co-leader was unable to come out due to a heavy workload.”

At the woman's response, Lee Chang-wee's lip edges dangerously curled up.

"Appointed as the co-leader of the pirates and now he's gone crazy. He's grown too big for his britches."

"I apologize. I'm sure he had no intention of offending you."

The surprised woman fumbled out an excuse.

"It's not something I should say to you, don't worry, pretty."

Lee Chang-wee groped her breasts as he calmly spoke.

The woman was embarrassed and didn't know what to do. She couldn't brush his hand away and wasn't able to do anything.

Amongst the gathered men, a heavy air began to wrap around them.

But no one said a word to Lee Chang-wee.

Lee Chang-wee's provocative gaze, like the devil, were peering everywhere.

Gloating anyone to take a shot at him.

I'll make an example of you.

"Humph, this is no fun."

Lee Chang-wee let go of her breasts and said to the woman.

"Take me to Heising."

"Yes, yes!"

She went up ahead of him as if running away.

Amidst the intimidating atmosphere, they made their way through the men and Lee Chang-wee didn't blink an eye.

Rather, when he would pass by, the other men tensed up.

Lee Chang-wee, the strongest in China, was showing off his overwhelming presence.



Lee Chang-wee was escorted into a two story building built completely out of timber.

When they came to the second floor, Lee Chang-wee's expression changed.

He saw someone in a chair made of leopard skin with his body slanted in the chair and reading a book.

His age probably barely late 20's.

Long hair in a ponytail and four piercings on both ears, a man that made an impression.

"Watching you hard at work leaves a strong impression."

Said Lee Chang-wee.

"Oh, General Lee Chang-wee."

The young man with the piercings had a leisurely face as he replied while closing his book.

Heising.

The boss of the pirates for several years, the Chinese examinee group's pirate leader.

And the rival assigned by the Chinese communist party leaders to Lee Chang-wee.

# Chapter 131 – In the Sea (Part 1)

---

“It’s not what it looks like, I wasn’t just playing. Don’t feel too bad.”

Said Heising as he threw the book to the side.

The book was an adult magazine full of naked lady photos.

Lee Chang-wee clearly saw the adult magazine and smirked.

“Really? Looks that way.”

“Really.”

“I think I know why you failed last time.”

Then for the first time, Heising’s expression hardened.

“How dare you say I failed, seems harsh.”

“Then was it a success?”

“I’m just saying it was unexpected. How was I to know Odin from the Nordic exam group would be there.”

Said Heising with a grin.

“On top of that, that Kim Hyun-ho that you failed to capture played a big role. Not long ago, you went to Korea and returned with nothing to show for it, how could that be? Considering your position that is.”

“Worrying about my position, how thoughtful of you. Don’t worry. Since that’s why I’ve come.”

“What does that mean?”

“I came because you might not be enough to handle everything.”

Heising’s face distorted.

“I’m not enough? Is that what you really think?”

“It is.”

“I think that is just your personal opinion. The pirates are under my jurisdiction, and I don’t need your participation, boss.”

“Is that so, if I help it’ll be that much easier but you don’t need it?”

“If you’re here, the work becomes more of a hassle. On top of that.....”

Heising spoke while his eyes glared wide in rebellion.

“Dismissing me into inadequacy, pushing the boss’ mistake ambiguously to downplay your own?”

Lee Chang-wee smirked.

But afterwards. With menace in his eyes, walked towards him with confidence.

Heising stood his ground and met his gaze.

Lee Chang-wee said.

“Last time when your pirates failed, who was the one that got called in and reprimanded?”

“You, boss.”

“Then isn’t it clear why I should be involved?”

Heising got up from his seat.

From the same eye level they tested each other and Heising said.

“There won’t be any loss to you boss. Soon, immediately, I’ll clean up the Deport harbor quite nicely.”

“I hope you do. I’ll be watching.”

Lee Chang-wee turned around and left.

Heising said in a low voice.

“Son of a bitch. Pretending to be all that and flaunting around, those days will be over soon.”

Their ages were similar and he had almost reached the same level

of power as well.

And before Heising became an examinee he too was a martial artist.

Lee Chang-wee was a martial artist and he had a tendency to treat all other examinees as amateurs, Heising was the only one amongst them all that was separate from that.

‘Anyway, I should hurry.’

It seemed he would have to hurry a bit more to complete the work of invading the deport harbor.

If he wanted to show Lee Chang-wee his results that is.

\*\*\*

“They plan on leaving for the monster eradication in one week.”

Said regiment commander Ajen with a scoffing tone.

“They want to finish the monster suppression we couldn’t finish last time because of the pirates’ appearance.”

“Not even trying to be subtle anymore...”

“Those bastards.”

“Adsel, that son of a bitch!”

The fishermen expressed their rage.

“But at least they’re being so obvious so we know when the pirates will come attacking again.”

I said.

Regiment commander Ajen sighed.

“That’s true. But I don’t know if it’s a good thing or a bad thing. Anyway, we have to carry out our plans, you really think it’s possible?”

Consular Adsel and regiment commander Decker, their murder is what he was alluding to.

I nodded my head.

“Yes, I’ve memorized their faces and I can kill them at any time.”

For a while now, I had been observing regiment commander Decker from afar and memorized his face.

The pirates were going to attack so there was no way both of them would be staying at harbor deport.

I’m thinking of killing them both when he starts to move the army away, Then regiment commander Ajen will take control of the army, which should be in a state of chaos, and then prepare them to face the pirate attack.

We boarded the old fisherman’s Vincent’s boat together and went to the location a couple times too.

Vincent’s boat was an old sailing vessel but unlike its age, it sailed along the waters very well.

Sylph pushed the boat with wind and the boat used that wind to travel much faster than usual.

Vincent skillfully used Sylph’s wind as well to make the trip go even more smoothly.

With this level of skill and speed, even if we encountered the pirates, I think we could escape without any issues.

“We have done all our preparations as well.”

“We have told our families and neighbors to prepare to evacuate as well.”

“We have procured harpoons and weapons as well. This time when they come, no one will leave unscathed.”

Like brave seamen, the fishermen were full of fighting spirit.

Regiment commander Ajen spoke.

“My preparations are complete as well. I’ve given my trusted subordinates orders about the anticipated pirate attack. As soon as

it happens, they'll move.”

“Now all that's left to do is to act.”

The results of our exams hung on this as well. The bigger the threat, the more we have to prepare ourselves.

\*\*\*

Consul Adsel, with the help of the soldiers, got on his horse with a lot of difficulty. As if that wasn't enough, a foot soldier had to hold his reins for him. The soldiers had a lot of misgivings about having a consular, who couldn't even properly ride a horse, lead the way on a monster expedition.

The soldiers had already experienced having this useless human being as the consul for a long time. Such a person made everything difficult.

Especially because consul Adsel gave orders not related to actual fighting.

He knew nothing about the military but was always trying to flaunt his authoritative powers.

“Have both groups gathered?”

“Yes!”

“Yes!”

At Adsel's question, two leaders replied.

Regiment commander Ajen and Decker looked at each other.

Regiment commander Decker, unlike the disheveled military uniform on the middle aged man that was regiment commander Ajen, was a handsome and proper looking young man.

Regiment commander Decker smiled.

“Thank you for your service once again, regiment commander Ajen.”

“Of course.”

Usually just he pretended to be respectful so he would have glared back at him.

But today, regiment commander Ajen's expression was endlessly peaceful. His reason.....

‘He's going to die soon anyway.’

There was no reason to get mad at someone bound to die soon.

‘That is the frailty of human life. He's bound to die soon but I wonder how much he played with the pirates in order to lead such a good life.’

Looking at regiment commander Decker, regiment commander Ajen felt the futility of life.

The army departed.

Because consul Adsel was leading the march, it was a very slow pace.

The gazes of the people while watching the army depart the deport harbor were not kind.

“They don't even do any work but always go on these so called monster expeditions.....”

“Eradicate the pirates instead.”

“Those assholes, always showing up late after the fact and cleaning up.....”

“They're no army, they're just the sanitation department.”

While receiving the ill gazes of all the people, the smiling face of the front-leading consul Adsel did not change at all.

But then.

Puk-!

It was like time had stopped.

At the sudden turn of events, no one could react.

With his face still smiling, consul Adsel's head exploded like a shattered watermelon.

And then afterwards.....

Puk!

Regiment commander Decker was gushing blood out of a hole in his chest.

“Kyaaaak!”

One woman screamed.

As if that was the signal, screams began to ring out from all over the place.

“Uaccck!”

“What, what is that!!”

The Deport harbor was swept into chaos.

The soldiers were the same.

The front-leading consul Adsel and then regiment commander Decker's instantaneous deaths, they didn't know what to do and stood in place dumbly.

In this situation, they couldn't tell from who or what kind of attack it was.

Then.

“Calm down! Troop withdrawal!”

Shouted regiment commander Ajen with a loud voice. Even amongst the chaos his voice was heard clearly.

“Citizens as well, do not gather here, everyone evacuate the area!”

Regiment commander Ajen rode his horse and delivered his orders all around.

Only then did the people, struck with fear, frantically make their



way home.

The army, according to regiment commander Ajen's orders, began to withdraw.

'Now is the chance. We have to move fast.'

This chaos was his opportunity to gain control of the subordinates that were under regiment commander Decker.

While they didn't know what to do, he had to give out orders and appear strong.

With organized orders, the public would feel safe and the command of the soldiers would naturally lean towards regiment commander Ajen.

Regiment commander Ajen moved fast.

He declared the deaths of consul Adsel and regiment commander Decker as the work of the pirates and placed the evacuation order for the citizens.

Because it was a time of such chaos, no one thought to question regiment commander Ajen's power grab.

The greatest soldier placement was put in place to block the landing of the pirates and the soldiers initiated scouting on the seas.

A half day passed since the soldiers began scouting the nearby waters.

The pirates appeared!

Insane numbers of pirate ships were seen to be voyaging towards the harbor.

Regiment commander Ajen gave the citizen's an urgent evacuation order.

Because they had already prepared to evacuate, the people were able to flee in an orderly fashion.

Regiment commander Ajen took one of regiment commander Decker's subordinate squads and ordered them to watch over the evacuated people.

Even while leaving the harbor, people were doubtful.

"Was regiment commander Ajen always this kind of person?"

"It looks like the army is actually doing its job this time?"

Since everyone was already prepared to evacuate and knew that the pirates were on their way, everyone was sent away safely.

On top of that, sending soldiers to watch and keep those people safe too helped with the entire process.

It wasn't the regiment commander Ajen they had known so far.

People began to think differently of regiment commander Ajen.

\*\*\*

I was on the hill where I had killed the four corrupt examinees last time.

There was no better place to shoot from than here and here I succeeded in murdering consul Adsel and regiment commander Decker.

I packed up my AW50F and, using the Divine Protection of the Wind, in one spring, I raced towards the harbor.

On the dock filled with soldiers, Cha Ji-hye and the old fisherman Vincent were waiting.

"You've arrived."

Cha ji-hye welcomed me in her usual flat tone.

"Yes, let's go."

Together we headed for Vincent's sailboat. But the soldiers stationed on the dock blocked our way.

"Right now, due to the presence of pirates, departure is

forbidden.”

They recognized my status and spoke respectfully. I waved my hand.

“I received an order from regiment commander Ajen.”

“From the regiment commander?”

The soldiers were flustered.

Of course, that was hard to believe.

Then Vincent stepped up.

“Look now, he is not lying. Can you not trust me?”

“Vincent ajusshi.”

“But we’ve been given the order to control this dock.....”

The soldiers were locals here and looked like they were familiar with Vincent.

‘This old man Vincent has a far better reputation than I thought.’

Vincent started trying to persuade them.

“If it wasn’t an order, do you think we’d be crazy enough to go out to sea in this situation?”

“That’s true but.....”

“It’s not a lie so trust me and let us through.”

The soldiers looked at each other and discussed, then, made room for us to pass.

“Okay. Be careful ajusshi.”

“Of course. Now, let’s go.”

With the brave Vincent leading the way, we quietly followed him from behind.

## Chapter 132 – In the Sea (Part 2)

---

The boat rode the wind and propelled forward. Vincent maneuvered the boat with ease.

“Let’s see.”

Said Vincent as he looked around.

“We are about halfway there.”

I feel suspicious.

That was because no matter which direction we looked, all we could see was ocean.

Not even a rock could be seen.

Without any landmarks and nothing but the blue ocean, how could he know?

“Are you measuring our trip by time?”

Vincent laughed.

“Haha, you do when you go far into the sea. This here is just the front lawn, you could take a nap on the boat and wake up and still know where you are.”

“That is possible?”

“Live your whole life on a boat and that’s possible.”

Vincent laughed loudly and rowed.

Despite being on our way to fight with our lives on the line, his face was bright.

A really bold person.

He is worthy of others’ trust.

Time went by like this.

“We’ve arrived.”

Said Vincent.

“You’re saying the pirates will pass here?”

“Yes, I’m sure we will be able to see them with from here with just our naked eyes.”

“By the way, are you a good swimmer?”

I asked. Speaking informally to an elder, it still felt really awkward.

Vincent laughed.

“Of course. You could believe it even if I said my ancestors were fish.”

“During the fight the boat may shake so much it may flip, many situations can arise so be careful.”

“Yes, don’t worry about me.”

Vincent leisurely took out his fishing pole and began to fish. What a bold person indeed.

A little later, lifting the large fish he caught, he smiled .

“Would you like to eat?”

“I’d love to.”

“Originally you should grill this but eating it raw is good too. It has a good chewy texture to it.”

It seems the Arena world also has sushi.

“Is it tastier cooked?”

“Yup. But it’s a hassle to make a fire here and the smoke will draw the attention of the pirates too.”

“I can grill it. Sylph, Kasa!”

I summoned my two spirits.

-Meow.

-Bark!

“Grill the fish for me. Sylph, spread the smoke out so it can’t be seen.”

The two spirits immediately followed the command. Kasa grilled, Sylph dissipated the smoke.

Sizzling, the smoke rose from the fish.

“Oh, it’s being grilled quite well.”

Excited, Vincent got three plates and divided the fish. It was such a large fish that even split three ways there was more than enough.

The calm before the storm.

We peacefully chattered and ate.

“They’re slowly starting to come in.”

Said Vincent as he stared far off.

I looked at the direction he was gazing in but I couldn’t really see anything.

Vision buff level 1 gave me 1.0 vision but I didn’t see a single dot.

Cha Ji-hye seemed to be having the same issue. She wrinkled her face and tried to see something, it was kind of cute.

“Haha, I have pretty good vision.”

I do think I’ve heard before that fisherman who always look far into the seas have good eyes.

I re-summoned Sylph and sent her in the direction Vincent pointed us in.

The scene Sylph saw began to be relayed into my brain.

Before, it was a series of images that were relayed to me but now it was more like watching a live stream video.

And not only that but if I think of an order, it would get delivered right away.

It's too much to do a complex order but I could give simple orders like scouting or to return without opening my mouth.

With the spirits reaching superior level, their connections to me grew that much more as well.

Through Sylph, I was able to see the pirates.

Multitudes of pirate ships were sailing in a giant wedge formation.

By my count, there were no less than 32 ships.

With such big number, they were able to make a bold and confident approach.

With this force, it wouldn't be a stretch to say these weren't your average pirate.

'Because of the Chinese exam group.'

The Chinese exam groups' examinees has inflated the number of pirates.

With the Aman empire's power holders, the black magicians plus the cartels, the chances are high that it is the work project of the Chinese exam group.

"Weaponize, AW50F."

The AW50F was summoned. It is such a heavy gun that the boat shook a bit.

Vincent, at the sudden appearance of a giant metal thing, was surprised.

I got my basic balance back and stood, raised my gun, and assumed a shooting position.

Physical strength buff intermediate level 5 plus the synthetic muscle suit, the weight and recoil wouldn't be a problem but being on a small boat, there was a big danger of losing my balance.

'Come.'

I waited for the pirate ships to approach within a reasonable distance.

In the real world, the current sniper record was an Australian special forces' record set in Afghanistan for 2,815 m.

The gun used for that record is similar to mine. With a 12.7 caliber bullet, the anti-material sniper rifle Barrett M82A1.

If it were me, I'm sure a distance over 5 km would be possible. With my bullet revision at the master level and combined with spirit summons with the shooting skill, it wouldn't be a problem.

But in order to actually cause damage, I needed to wait for the ships to get closer.

Finally, they were close enough that I could see the ships with my own eyes.

It was such a clear and bright day that even from afar, I could see the pirate ships clearly.

'Since they're in a giant wedge formation, I should shoot the lead ship first.'

I aimed for the mast of the first ship.

"Sylph, Kasa, prepare to shoot."

-Meow.

-Wal! (Bark!)

The two spirits sat atop each shoulder. There were two big things on my shoulders but they have no weight and so did not affect my shooting stance.

"Sylph, get rid of the sound of the bullet."

-Meow.

Sylph swatted me on the cheek with her tail letting me know she understood. So cute.

There was no special need to aim while shooting. Sylph used her



tail to aim the barrel for me and I immediately pulled the trigger.

Pooshook-!

The bullet ripped through the air as it flew ahead.

Thanks to Sylph's power, the bullet was stronger and split through the mast of the first ship.

With immense power, the mast tilted and fell.

One mast with a giant sail broke and fell causing the pirate ship falters.

'Good, one more shot.'

This time, I shot down the rear main mast.

Pooshook-!!

The main mast fell without the need for a 2nd shot.

In an instant, suddenly without sails, the foremost pirate ship just teetered, unable to move forward any further.

Then the ship tilted in the direction the two masts fell in.

'Ah, if both masts fall in the same direction, it'll cause the ship to tilt that way.'

I sent my thoughts to Sylph. Sylph, acknowledging she understands, nodded her head.

With the ship suddenly stopping, the giant wedge formation broke apart.

I picked my next target and without holding back, pulled the trigger.

I followed with two shots and two masts fell to the left and that ship too fell over on its left.

As the pirate ship began to sink, the pirates let down their emergency boats and began escaping into the ocean.

Being able to sink a ship with two bullets, I had a big sense of

achievement.

“Pretty incredible.”

Mumbled Vincent with a surprised face.

I said to Vincent.

“We should start moving now too. They’ll be chasing after us.”

“Yes, yes!”

Vincent began to row his boat.

I moved to the back, chose my next target, and pulled the trigger again.

The mast fell without effort.

Already, three of the pirate ships unable to continue on.

\*\*\*

“What is it?”

Said Heising who came out onto the deck frowning.

“Leader!”

The pirates, with obvious looks of confusion, bowed their heads down to Heising.

The leader of pirates from the Chinese examinee group, Heising.

In the Arena, he had the power of controlling the pirate army.

Heising scanned the waters.

The giant wedge formation that the ships were supposed to be in were now a scattered mess.

On top of that, three of them have fallen and were sinking. Those on board were quickly escaping but everything was still a chaotic mess.

“What happened?”

Asked Heising.

Then, a middle aged man that was wearing a peaked hat, approached and reported.

“We have been attacked and the three foremost ships are sinking.”

“The enemy?”

“That is..... we can't tell from what kind of enemy it was or even what kind of attack we were hit with.”

And then.

Pooshook-!!

The sound of something coming fast,

Bba ji jik!

The very ship that they were on, the foremast shattered and fell to the right.

“Uack!”

“It's our turn!”

The mast that was holding the sails fell over and the pirates started to panic.

Heising's face wrinkled.

“It's him.”

Heising could tell right away it was an attack from Kim Hyun-ho.

The only thing unexpected was the fact that the sniper rifle was strong enough to shatter the mast in one blow.

“Leader, uh, over there!”

Screamed a pirate that was observing from the main mast watchtower.

Looking carefully in the direction the pirate pointed it, he could see something floating. It looked to be a small sailboat.

“He's attacking from there.”

Heising gave an order to the captain.

“Full speed towards the enemy.”

“Yes!”

He rang the horn letting everyone know of the charge.

The pirate ships all moved forward.

But the ship that Heising was on had a shattered foremast and couldn't move forward.

On top of that,

Kwa ji jik!

Another bullet shattered the main mast.

The wooden trunk split and like a tree felled with an axe, it fell.

“Uaak!”

The pirate in the watch tower of the main mast screamed.

Kooong!

Eventually the main mast completely fell.

With both the foremast and the main mast fallen to the right, the pirate ship tilted to the right as well.

“Acck!”

“Hold tight!”

The pirates all slid towards the tilted side.

While keeping his balance, Heising glanced around and found the captain clinging to the broken mast.

“Take care of this on your own.”

“Um, what?”

Heising put his full strength into jumping. His figure flew up into the sky like a bird.

Just like that, Heising disappeared from the tilting ship. The

captain had no idea how to handle his sinking ship.

On the other hand, Heising had moved to the ship next to it and shouted at the Chinese examinee group members.

“Gather around the masts and protect it! He’s shooting them down.”

“Yes!”

The corrupt examinees that specialized in defense held up their shields to protect the foremast.

But it was a useless.

There was no one able to see the bullet coming with their naked eye.

Thus, not knowing where the bullet will land, they couldn’t defend ahead of time.

Kwa ji ji jik!

The bullet hit above where none of the examinees could reach.

The examinees that were wrapped around the mast to protect it could do nothing but stare dumbly at the falling foremast.

Heising scoffed.

At this rate, the whole pirate fleet would become obsolete from just that one Kim Hyun-ho.

“Magicians, protect the mast with defense magic! And increase the speed a bit!”

“Yes!”

The examinees that had magic as their main skill began to use their defense magic.

“Let down one boat!”

Even amongst the chaos, a small boat was let down.

Heising, with one other examinee, jumped down onto the boat.

“Row.”

“Yes!”

The other examinee began to row the boat as told.

Standing still, Heising stared up ahead.

‘On this day, I’ll cause your premature death with my own hands.’

# Chapter 133 – Heising (Part 1)

---

Just two bullets were enough to sink an entire ship.

I thought it was enough to just prevent the ships from moving but having both masts fall in the same direction had a huge effect.

I had sunk five ships in this manner when.

“The bastards are gaining speed!”

Shouted Vincent.

“Let’s do the same.”

“Yes, but we cannot go faster than they can. They capture tons of people as slaves to row their boats.”

Now that I looked closer, each pirate ship had tons of paddles.

Every time I used two bullets to sink a ship, the people caught as slaves were dying.

‘It can’t be helped.’

I got a shitty feeling but it didn’t affect my sense of integrity and morals. It’s as I’ve said, nothing can be done about it.

I gave Sylph an order.

“Push the boat with wind.”

-Meow!

A stand of wind pushed at our sail. And as it did, the sailboat we were on lurched forward.

Just like that, as we kept a steady distance between us and the pirate ships, I continued shooting.

Poo shook—

The AW50F fired.

Kaang!

But this time, the bullet hit something I wasn't able to see and I heard the sound of the bullet flinging off.

‘It's defense magic.’

I immediately switched target to a different ship.

In the world of the Arena, there weren't that many magicians.

Even amongst the corrupt Chinese examinees, there can't be that many who practice magic.

Thus, that meant that there couldn't be a magician on every ship.

Rather than scuffle with a magician's defense magic, I thought it was a much wiser choice to just switch what ship I was attacking.

My thinking was correct.

The newly targeted pirate ship had no defense methods so the mast shattered without any issues.

Even from afar I could sense the pirates' panic.

With their massive formation in ruins, they were just heading in the direction of our sailboat.

But then, all of a sudden, one small boat came into sight.

There were two people on board and despite just one person rowing, their speed was very fast.

‘An examinee!’

I switched my target to the two people on the boat.

I looked at the two people on board through my scope.

A plain looking middle aged man was hard at work rowing the boat.

The other looked to be in his late 20's, a young man, his long hair tied behind him and with a lot of piercings on his ears.

The young man had an arrogant expression and was cockily standing on his boat, looking this way.



This young man was probably high up in the pirate ranks.

If he wasn't, it would be very weird for him to be standing there while someone older was rowing.

‘Hm, shall we see what you’re made of?’

I aimed for the young man’s head and pulled the trigger.

Poo shook—

Surprisingly, nearly at the same moment I pulled the trigger, the young man tilted his head to the side and dodged it.

The speed with which he moved his head to the left was so fast, I almost didn’t see it.

That reaction could only mean he knew there was a bullet coming at him.

And he dodged it!

A reflex rate far surpassing that of human limits.

‘He’s an aura master!’

I had heard it from Odin in the past which is how I could tell.

This time, I shot aiming at his torso.

Then the opponent threw a hard punch.

Kwang!

The heavy thud rang all the way out here.

Surprisingly, this time he hit the bullet with his fist. My bullet that could pierce through walls!

His fist was wrapped in a blue aura.

No, his whole body was engulfed a flaming haze.

‘He uses his bare hands as a weapon.’

That means the opponent was a magician.

Why?

Because if he wasn't a martial artist before he became an examinee, it would be weird for him to not have chosen a weapon.

It is far more advantageous to have a weapon than to not, and if he wasn't a martial artist, there was no reason he would have stubbornly stuck the bullet with his bare hands.

With two shots, I had somewhat an idea of who my opponent is.

'He's confident in close combat. That means.....'

I smiled.

'I just won't let him get close.'

I fired two shots in succession.

This time, I didn't aim for the young man with the piercings that had the aura master skill.

The middle aged man in the back that was rowing his two paddles as hard as he could.

The two paddles were shattered and the middle aged man was flustered. The boat could no longer move forward and was stuck in place.

The young man must have been angry because he glared in my direction.

Looking through the scope, it felt like our eyes had met.

'Now, what will you do?'

This time, I aimed for the boat they were on and pulled the trigger.

Pa ji jik!

It shattered the front of the boat.

The boat leaned forward and began to sink.

The young man ordered something to the middle-aged man.

The middle aged man nodded and jumped into the ocean.

The middle aged man swam and returned to the fleet.

And the young man made a strong leap from the sinking boat.

He flew into the sky and was coming this way.

“Be careful. If he is an aura master.....”

It was while Cha Ji-hye was speaking when.

Surprisingly, the young man started running on top of the water.

Every time his feet touched the water, the water would erupt where he stepped and his body would fly forward.

“..... even things like that are possible. He releases aura in his feet and can maintaining running position even on the water. It is possible if you are an aura master.”

It was similar to how I run using the Divine Protection of the Wind.

With incredible speed, the young man headed this way.

I fired one more shot at the young man that was charging towards me.

Kaang!

A circle of aura appeared and defended the young man who was in the center of it. The aura shield sparked when the bullet ricocheted off.

‘I see, so you can do that too!’

I thought of the explanation Odin gave me.

This was my first battle with an aura master.

“Stay here. I’ll have to go towards him.”

“Do you think you’ll be okay alone?”

“Yes, if it’s on the sea, I’ll have a big advantage.”

On top of the water, using Sylph’s wind power, I can stay afloat.

But that young man, in order to keep running on top of the water, must was using up a lot of his aura supply. I'm sure of it.

I unsummon my AW50F and order Sylph through my mind.

Synthesize!

Sylph merged into my body.

Instantly, wind wrapped around my body.

The warm energy of nature overflowed within me.

‘Good, let’s go!’

I leapt off the sailboat.

The young man was staring at me and gathered his aura into his right fist.

The flowing flames of the blue aura took the shape of his fist.

Would I call that an aura fist?

Anyway, the young man looked ready to land a huge blow to me.

I could guess what the young man was planning to do.

He would have thought the same thing as me.

Since he was disadvantaged on the water, he'll want to have a fast as possible win with one massive blow.

If that's the case, I just won't play along!

Paat!

With a step on the surface of the water I lunged forward.

The young man looked up at me and jumped too. Spewing aura from his feet, it made a huge wave flow across the water.

As he jumped, he made a huge fist.

I immediately called the wind and shifted left.

His punch missed me.

“Bastard!”

The young man shouted out as he faltered in midair.

Hwi li lik!

From there he wrapped an immense amount of aura on his right foot and did a spin kick.

I created a whirlwind again and dodged it.

Hwaaang!

The shock pushed both of us apart.

With his determination and incredible leg strength, I got pushed further away.

The young man, who had now fallen to the ocean, took another strong step on the surface of the water.

Chwaaaak!

Like a backwards flowing waterfall, the ocean created giant ripples.

With that recoil, the young man came flying towards me again.

No need to face him head on. We would be evenly matched if we fought on land, but in the ocean and in the air, I had much more of an advantage!

I rode my wind in a clockwise direction.

Then I sent a wind knife at his back.

Swe e ek—

Had he sensed the danger?

Even though he was in midair, he was able to sharply twist his body and send out a side kick.

Paaang!

The wind knife was destroyed from his aura kick.

He reminded me of an Olympic taekwondo athlete. Such a clean move! I was naturally in awe. I was definitely right in my

assumption he was a martial artist.

Then should I see just how good his skills are?

I created 12 wind knives.

And from left, right, top, all directions, I attacked the young man.

The young guy just looked at them while sneering.

His two fists became enveloped in aura.

Endless punching ensued!

The young man spun around and around in midair as he descended and like a rain, his punches were all encompassing. In every direction, his punches rang out Pa pa pa pa pa pang!

It was almost confusing how many arms he had. I could even see the aura's afterimage.

All 12 wind knives had been destroyed.

But that super speed punching, I felt like I had seen it a lot somewhere.

That punch as if multiple fists are growing from his arm like eggplants. That.....

“Is that Fānziquán?”\*

(TLN: Mentioned in chapter 14, Bāguà zhǎng is known for circle walking. It literally means ‘eight trigram palm.’ Fānziquán routines are usually quite short and very fast. It literally means ‘rotating fist.’

I ask lightly as we both descended.

The young man's facial expression changed.

“Unexpected. That a mere Korean martial artist amateur could recognize this.”

“I knew a crazy skilled Chinese martial artist. If he was alive he

would have been stronger than the likes of you.”

“Ha, I’ve met many guys who think that. Eventually all of them kneeled before me.”

“Well, sort out your levels in the afterlife. Go to the afterlife and find Kang Chun-seong.”

“.....what?”

I hovered over him and created 24 wind knives.

Here, twice that of before. Try eating all of these.

Pa pa pa pa pat-!

Wind knives enveloped him from all directions.

“Kuk!”

The young man grit his teeth, then once again began his punching.

Pu pup u pup u pup u pung!

It was incredible.

I couldn’t help but be awed by his skill.

The disciplined and detailed movement of every punch. I could feel the strength of the mastery and concentration that was different from that of an amateur.

The young man, having eradicated all the wind knives once more, somersaulted in midair and with one foot, mad an elegant jump down to the surface of the water.

Paaang!

A wall of water shot up!

This time, lightly jumping off into the air, the young man threw a kick at me.

His foot came in like a blade.

I moved my body to the side and evaded by ducking my body

down.

With one hand, I grabbed the surface of the water. A net of wind supported my hand.

With the other hand, I did a cartwheel to back away.

The power of Sylph and having played excitedly with the elves the games of tag, this was the result of those things.

I created a whirlwind to encompass my body. And I sharpen my whirlwind like razors.

Surrounded by whirlwind made of wind knives, I headed towards the young man.

The young man, as if thinking I had been caught in a trap, made an aura fist and punched out at me.

But before the encounter, I shot upwards. Just the whirlwind made of wind knives remained to clash with the young man.

Am I crazy? Like I would crash into him with my whole body.

Kwaaaaang-!

The whirlwind made of wind knives and the young man's aura fist collided.

The ripped whirlwind scattered in all directions and created waves in the ocean.

A blowing gale on top of the seas.

Having flown up into the air, with 24 wind knives, I pounced on the man.



## Chapter 134 – Heising (Part 2)

---

“Fucking son of a bitch!”

Enraged, the young man put all his might into leaping up towards me and punched.

Pa pa pa pat!

The wind daggers I sent at him were like a typhoon, but his punches were able to block them all as he approached.

However, this time, I flew up higher and dodged his attacks.

I just have to wait until his stamina runs out. Is there really even a need for me to fight against him?

“Scaredy cat! Come at me like a man!”

Screamed the young man.

“I don’t want to.”

“Do you think you’ll benefit the longer you drag this out?”

“I do.”

“You’re a dumb bastard.”

The man left me with those words before descending again.

Why did he call me dumb?

I soon realized why.

From the horde of pirate ships, the pirates had let down their boats and were rowing towards me.

I could safely assume the majority of those people were Chinese examinees.

The sailboat with Cha Ji-hye and Vincent on it was fleeing as well but the distance between them was getting smaller and smaller.

‘I see.’

When the middle aged man had jumped ship and swam back to the fleet, he must have relayed an order for the examinees to come out.

The young man stepped off the surface of the water again and as he flew up towards me he said.

“Now are you interested in seeing this through?”

“Sure. Let’s really go at it this time.”

I activated the Divine Protection of the Wind.

The Divine Protection of the Wind I mastered last time by investing all my karma in it!

I obtained a skill that caused my spirit summons ability to multiply by three.

The Divine Protection of the Wind could be used for 3 hours.

For three hours, I would become three times stronger.

I flew straight at the young man and punched.

The gust of wind hit him.

Puuung!

“Kuk!”

He easily blocked with both his arms which were covered in aura but the young man’s body was thrust backwards.

The young man looked actually surprised at the power of the wind.

‘Let’s do this!’

I crazily threw out double punches.

It was a copy of the young man’s Fānziquán style that he had shown several times.

With my reflex skill superior level 1, I was able to copy his movements pretty well.

As the gusts flew about like crazy, the surprised young man created a protective barrier around himself.

Kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa Kwang-!

Like hammering a nail, my punches pounded down on the young man's protective aura barrier.

While continually being pushed back, with the barrier in place, the young man got pushed into the water.

‘Do you know how to swim? I’ll help you float!’

It was then when I was feeling cocky that...

Chwa a a a ak!

A water pillar came up and the young man shot up into the sky.

Surprisingly, the young man wasn't wet at all.

‘Is that something possible with aura control too? Regardless, that is pretty incredible.’

“Come at me!”

Shouted the young man as he came at me.

I too kept punching out wind gusts while using his Fānziquán technique.

And the young man threw out just as many aura punches against them.

Kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa Kwang-!!

As if an earthquake was occurring, the shock shook the world around us.

Within this battlefield that was basically in the middle of a hurricane, the young man held an advantage.

Surprisingly, the young man, while being attacked by my wind attacks, was inching his way closer to me.

‘How can he be doing this?’

Not only that, he's not even on the ground, he was on top of the sea.

With waves under his feet, would it not be normal for him to be pushed back from the wind?

My question was quickly answered.

Upon close inspection, he wasn't going head on against the gusts from the punches.

At the moment of contact, he was making some delicate adjustments and allowed the wind to flow past him.

Because of this, he had the ability to use aura in his feet to keep moving forward.

'I don't think we'll see an end to this fighting if nothing changes.'

I made up my mind different.

My spirit summons was at the superior level and my Divine Protection of the Wind was mastered too.

On top of that, the location was also beneficial to me is why I confidently tackled him head on. But of course, aura masters are strong.

'No need to do it this way.'

I left the young man and flew back towards the sailboat.

And I discontinued the synthesis with Sylph, she returned to her cat form and nestled herself around my neck.

"How is it?"

Asked Cha Ji-hye.

"He's definitely strong. I didn't think it would end the way it was going so I came back."

"The, the man is coming!"

Yelled Vincent.

The young man was rapidly racing across the top of the water towards us.

At that extraordinary sight, even the bold old fisherman couldn't help but be surprised it seemed.

"We should run too. It's going to start shaking severely so hold on tight to the boat."

Vincent and Cha Ji-hye grabbed ahold of the boat.

"Sylph!"

-Meow!

I gave Sylph an order through my mind and Sylph, having heard my thoughts, nodded her head.

Then,

Puuung!

With a blast, the sailboat soared forward.

An explosion at the rear of the boat from the force of the air almost caused us to fly away. Atop the shaking boat, Cha Ji-hye was holding on with one hand and the other hand was holding onto Vincent, who was about to fall out.

With my reflex skill, I was able to maintain my balance.

As the sailboat kept flying forwarding at a crazy pace, the distance between us and the young man was no longer decreasing.

"Weapon, AW50F."

I summoned the AW50F and shot at the young man. I shot recklessly and Sylph took care of the aiming for me.

Poo shook!!

The bullet bounced off the young man's aura barrier. But thanks to that, his movement was stunted a little bit.

I kept shooting and the young man finally gave up his pursuit.

It seems he's thinking that all the chasing will just use up his aura and stamina.

The sailboat we are in circumvented the pirate's fleet in a half circle.

As we do, so I shoot the boats coming after us.

Of course, with the power of a large anti-material sniper rifle, every time I shoot, one of the boats would shatter and sink.

The examinees that knew some magic ignored the other boats and used defense magic to protect their own vessel.

I aimed for the boats without any defense magic and continued shooting.

'This is just bait.'

I was letting them know I'm specifically aiming for the boats.

And from that moment on, I aimed for the corrupt examinees holding spears.

Puk!

I could see the heads of the examinees being blow off through the scope.

'Aha!'

I immediately reloaded and shot at another corrupt examinee.

Poo shook!

The next one too, their head exploded and they died instantly.

Only then did the corrupt examinees hurriedly lowered their bodies or raised their shields to defend themselves.

'Good.'

Every time I killed a corrupt examinee, I got karma.

I've killed two so I'm sure that's a significant amount of karma.

Fighting like this, circumventing the group of pirates, I reached

the rear of the fleet.

From where I was, I could see the corrupt examinees swimming away from the sinking boats.

I aimed for the swimming corrupt examinees and succeeded in killing 2 more.

In just a short while, I had gotten rid of 4!

In an attempted to avoid my sniping, the swimming examinees started swimming deep underwater.

The pirates were in chaos.

The enemy was just in a small sailboat but had sunk five boats and continued to destroy everything.

To me, it looks like the pirates are full of holes.

The corrupt examinees that can use magic are all out on the rowboats.

That was an obvious mistake for the pirates.

The pirate ships had no one left to defend them!

Poo shook-!

Kwa jik!

With two shots in succession the two masts of a pirate ship fell down.

As the two masts collapsed to the left, the ship itself severally tilted over to the side.

The sails dangling from their masts got wet from the water and the weight dragged the boat down even further. The pirate ship eventually began to take on water and started sink.

There was mass chaos from the pirates trying to escape and swim to other ships.

I sank 3 ships this way and the corrupt examinees all seemed to

be returning to the ships.

‘That’s right, head back.’

I was vying for another chance.

I could see the corrupt examinees, one by one, get back onto the pirate ships.

Among them, I aimed for the corrupt examinees that could use magic.

The moment they were on the rope ladder climbing up!

The moment they weren’t paying enough attention to use their defense magic.

Poo shook!

The magician’s head exploded and disappeared into the sea. The headless corpse hung on the ladder.

“Fuck-!!”

The yell rang out across the sea.

It’s that aura master I was fighting just no.

Filled with rage to the tips of his hair, the young man once again raced atop the water toward us.

‘Ek!’

I was surprised that he was going all out to chase us again. I thought he would reserve his stamina for now and watch.

‘I knew he was high up but seeing him this angry, he must be the leader of these pirates.’

Strong enough to be an aura master, it made total sense that he would have such a position.

‘We should slowly start to make our escape.’

I had sunk 9 ships and gotten rid of 5 corrupt examinees.

These results were much better than I was expecting.



But I've also used a lot of energy and spirit summon time so it was a good time for us to retreat.

I used Sylph to push our sailboat back towards the Deport harbor.

The young man must have been extremely pissed off because he kept chasing us for quite a while but I kept him in check by shooting at him every so often. He eventually gave up and headed back.

After putting a bit of distance between us, I gave up on shooting at the fleet.

Then, Vincent grabbed the paddles.

As he rowed, he said.

"I'm confused as to whether I'm dreaming right now. You sank 9 of those treacherous pirate ships and fought against Heising, you weren't pushed back even a little!"

"Heising?"

"Isn't it a strange name? That's the name of the pirate leader."

"That bastard just now was the leader of the pirates?"

"Yes. He's the person that gathered all the various pirate groups and created the current one we just fought against. In addition, he boasts the incredible fight skill – aura master."

"Heising you say....."

I thought about the young man with the piercings and the long hair.

For sure, he was a formidably strong opponent but not that scary of one.

Seeing how he handled today's situation, I don't think he has the sharpest strategic mind.

It seems he got the highest position solely by being the strongest.

‘Is this Heising that rival that Lee Chang-wee was talking about?’

He’s an aura master and personality wise didn’t seem to have a problem being under someone.

Not only that, he was in a position to lead the entirety of the pirates and corrupt examinees.

With that much power, it was enough for Lee Chang-wee to consider him a rival.

‘If I kill Heising in this round, I’ll just be helping Lee Chang-wee.’

I thought about where Lee Chang-wee was.

The guider skill told me what direction he was in.

West.

That was the direction the pirate headquarters were in.

“Lee Chang-wee is at the pirate headquarters.”

At my words, Cha Ji-hye nodded her head.

“It’s clear what he’s after.”

“He’s waiting for Heising to take a hit.”

Fish in troubled water.

If Heising had fought this battle with me and gotten injured?

There’s a big chance that Lee Chang-wee would straight up kill Heising when he returned to the headquarters.

Fighting me and getting exhausted or injured. If he wasn’t waiting for that, what would the reason be that he didn’t get involved in the fight and be at the pirate headquarters instead?

‘I saw Heising as having a hot temperament but it might be that Lee Chang-wee pushed him to do it and he attacked ahead of time.’

At this point, it was impossible for me to not consider Lee Chang-wee’s involvement in this and what his plans were for the near future.

# Chapter 135 – The Harbor Battle (Part 1)

---

“If Heising were smart, he would stop fighting and withdraw his troops.”

On our way back to the harbor, Cha Ji-hye voiced her opinion.

I nodded my head.

“That’s the amount of damage just from me, one person. If he wants to avoid further damage, it would be right to stop fighting.”

“But with his personality, chances of that are slim.”

Explained Cha Ji-hye.

“Even coming out to fight to begin with, it was to make up for his failure last time. Probably, Lee Chang-wee goaded him into doing it.”

“I think so too.”

Funnily enough, Lee Chang-wee was expecting quite a lot from me.

After meeting me last time, he seemed to have some faith in me?

That I would cause Heising some trouble, it seems he was expecting that of me.

“Anyway, there is no need or wiggle room to go easy on Heising. Our side must carefully focus on the pirate battle. If possible, it would be good to not let Heising return alive.”

“Yes.”

While we were conversing, Vincent rowed silently.

And right at that time, the harbor dock came into view.

“We have arrived!”

Shouted Vincent in a good mood.

“Waahhhh!”

“They’re back!”

“Vincent ajusshi!”

From the lighthouse, we could hear shouting. The fisherman gathered at the lighthouse waved their hands and greeted us.

It seems they were rejoicing at the sight of seeing us safely return, The sailboat landed at the dock.

The soldiers guarding the dock lined up alongside it.

And a middle aged man taking care of the soldiers walked briskly between them.

It was regiment commander Ajen.

Unlike his usual self, his military uniform and hair was clean, he looked like a different person.

“You’ve returned.”

“Yes.”

“I’m glad, you don’t look injured. How did it go?”

“Among the 32 pirate ships, 9 are down.”

“A whole 9?”

Regiment commander Ajen’s eyes grew wide.

“Is that true?”

“You’re not lying?”

“Regiment commander! I saw it with my own eyes. You won’t disregard my eyes because I’m old will you?”

Vincent interjected.

Regiment commander Ajen nodded his head.

“The eyes that God gave you, how could I dismiss them? Tell me what happened.”

“He was incredible! The long and strange weapon he had, every

time it spewed fire, one of their masts broke and eventually the ships tilted and sank.”

Vincent excitedly explained the fight that he saw himself.

“My sailboat zoomed with the power of the spirit. Really, I’ve never had such an interesting experience in my life!”

Vincent pointed to me and continued his excited speech.

“This man, he also fought with Heising!”

“You don’t mean that pirate leader Heising?!”

“Yes! That bastard Heising, he jump ran at us on top of the water and this man was flying around the sky and had a big fight with Heising. He traversed sea and sky and fought it was really……!”

Listening to Vincent chatting away, the faces of regiment commander Ajen and his soldiers were overcome with awe.

And from those gazes looking over, I could see that they had started to respect me.

Then regiment commander Ajen grabbed my hands.

“I am truly moved! What this country could not do, you single handedly did! You are a hero!”

“No, really.”

“Their morale will be strongly shaken. Since they know now that a hero like you is at our harbor.”

“Well, no doubt they will feel very discouraged now. They’ve suffered a rather big and chaotic loss, they won’t be able to recover from it all.”

Rescuing the pirates from the sunken ships, reforming the messed up ship formation, on top of the mountain of other things they need to manage and fix now.

“But we can’t relax because of it. They took a huge hit but the pirates will not give up on the attack.”

At my words, regiment commander Ajen agreed.

“Of course, we must avoid carelessness and cannot let our guard down. Today, we must surely repel their advance and make it so they can never attack this port again.”

I nodded along in agreement.

Somehow, its not like there weren't any parts going according to Lee Chang-wee's wishes but there was no doubt that this was a good opportunity.

In the midst of the fight, by eliminating a ton of the corrupt examinees, it was a great opportunity to get lots of karma.

From the fight just now, I killed a whopping 5. The more the better.

\*\*\*

Under regiment commander Ajen's orders, everyone was immersed in preparations for battle.

I alone sat on a hilltop overlooking the harbor. I decided to set up here to snipe.

Oh by the way I should see how much karma I got from killing those corrupt examinees.

“Board summon.”

-Name: Kim Hyun-ho

-Class: 33

-Karma: +16,500

-Mission: block the pirate attack

-Time limit: none

‘Wow!’

I felt like rejoicing. 16,500 karma!

The result of one fight.

These bad people, acting as pirates and working with black magicians, had accrued a lot of minus karma.

Then if I kill the leader of the pirates, Heising, how much karma could I get for that?

Thinking about that, it made me want it that much more.

‘Am I somehow the same as them?’

Those bastards kill people to collect majeong, I kill them to get karma.

The awful sight of body parts exploding from the giant sniper rifle, I felt nothing from it now.

Rather, I just felt satisfaction when it was done in one shot.

“Weapon, AW50F.”

I summoned the AW50F and put it on the ground, lay down, and assumed my position.

They’re bad people anyway.

What’s so bad about gaining some from killing the bad guys?

..... Thoughts like that kept taking root in my mind.

I suddenly questioned.

How many people are there that want to clear the missions in this world?

The capitalists and politicians who had invested heavily into the Arena, I’m sure they don’t want a situation where it becomes impossible to collect majeong.

The Chinese examinee group is acting most openly about it but honestly, everyone must feel the same.

But was that just how the investors thought?

I don’t know if a majority of examinees themselves don’t want to clear the missions.

The identity of an examinee!

The specialness, knowing you are different from others, it gave you the pride of being a chosen one.

If all the exams are cleared and you never have to do the exams again, then what?

And all the skills you got from doing the exams, what if they disappeared?

I would return to the plain old me that I used to be.

Spending my days hung up on the civil service exam. Just a nobody.

I won't be treated as the important person I am now.

Will I be able to handle that?

Money wasn't the problem.

The fear inside an examinee's head, it's probably something like that.

Perhaps the corrupt examinees now, they are afraid of that and maybe that's why they chose the path they did.

'I'm not too sure about skilled people like Cha Ji-hye though.'

Originally even before being an examinee, Cha Ji-hye was skilled. I don't know what she might think.

But I am afraid of my past self. I'm scared I may return to that time.

But despite that, I will clear the exams.

Lee Hye-su.

Lee Jun-ho.

Kang Chun-seong.

My friends that died in the 3rd round. How badly did they want to live?



At the cost of their lives, I could live.

Thinking of that, aside from the ultimate goal of completing the final exam, I could have no other goal.

I wondered how much time passed.

Deng, deng, deng.

In the deport harbor, a bell rang out loudly.

Looking far out at the water's edge, I could see the pirate ships appearing.

5 pirate ships encased in defense magic led the way with the other pirate ships trailing behind.

It's a plan specifically targeted to protect themselves against me. Huh, seems like they're starting to use their brains a bit.

'Can't be helped.'

First, I decided to give up on aiming for the pirate ship masts.

I would observe the fight a little longer and when a strong opponent appeared, I planned on killing them right away. A strong pirate on the ship? Chances were high that it was a corrupt examinee.

The battle began on both sides.

The pirates got off the ships and attempted to land.

Starting from the docks and all the way in from the water, the soldiers began to rain down arrows.

The pirates were continuously falling down after being shot with arrows.

The pirates were relentlessly trying to land so they could launch their counterattack but it wasn't working.

I could sense a bit of panic spreading amongst the pirates.

'I see. They didn't realize there would be this much resistance at

the docks.'

In the past while they were in concert with consul Adsel and regiment commander Decker's help, they had always just walked in and achieved a bloodless victory.

From the position of the pirates that don't know of those two's deaths, this was a shocking situation.

At the relentless arrow attack and the pirate advancement being halted, regiment commander Ajen must have given out orders because the soldiers yelled out.

"Waaaaah!"

"Waahh!!"

"ADVANCE!!"

He was shouting as if we had already won. I think regiment commander had succeeded in getting the soldiers hyped up.

Anyway, this was a great start.

The pirate horde was actually using their brains so first they attempted to have the 5 ships encased in defense magic land.

When the landing was complete, they'll cast defense magic on the other ships so they can land. At least it looks like that's what they were planning.

'They must only have about 5 magicians then.'

It was a tactic to prevent me from shooting their ships but there was a huge hole in that plan.

If only those 5 protected ships attempt to dock instead of the entire fleet all at once, then the concentrated attack from the port's defenders was enough to relentlessly beat them back.

Also, it looked like Heising has given out an order.

The pirate ships that were hiding in the back began to approach the shoreline.

‘I’ve been waiting for this.’

I aimed for the ships without defense magic and pulled the trigger.

Taang—

I didn’t ask Sylph to hide the sound so the gunshot rang out.

One ship’s front mast fell to the left.

Taaang!

Then the back mast shattered.

Not able to keep its balance, the pirate ship tilted and smashed into the pirate ship next to it.

“Waaaa!”

The harbor defenders shouted again.

Taang-tang-taaang-!

I kept shooting.

With the same method, another two ships went down.

Of course, the pirates weren’t staying still either.

The pirates that had jumped off the ships were working together and falling off the ships like ants and started to climb ashore.

The harbor defenders resisted them by pouring down arrows but eventually the pirates were able to make it to land and butt heads with the soldiers.

With shields and spears in the front, the soldiers confronted the pirates and began to fight.

The harbor defenders were in a better formation but the pirates were bold.

Against pirates with plenty of fighting experience, the harbor defenders and soldiers who had been running away from these battles for so long could only hold their positions.

In the midst of this, I was enthralled in shooting down the pirate ships masts.

But then.

One figure from the harbor jumped up into thea air.

Looking more closely through the scope, I could see his face.

It's Heising.

With an incredible take-off, in an instant he jumped over the defense and landed on the shore.

And he jumped from one building to the next, flying through the air.

Heising was headed straight for the hilltop I was on.

## Chapter 136 – Harbor Battle (Part 2)

---

Heising was racing towards the hilltop I was on.

The pirates had probably marked me as their biggest enemy.

That's why, as soon as they realized where I was shooting from, Heising immediately came himself.

'Alright, I knew it would come to this eventually.'

Before this, I wanted to kill a few more corrupt examinees but it seemed I'd have to see it through with Heising first.

"Sylph, combine!"

-Meow!

Sylph was summoned and synthesized with me.

Paaat!

A wind gathered around my body.

"Divine Protection of the Wind!"

I unsummoned my AW50F and prepared for a close combat fight.

In preparation for fighting Lee Chang-wee in close combat, I had raised my synthesis skill to intermediate level 1.

With spirit summons superior level 1 and Divine Protection of the Wind mastery combined, I wouldn't be any weaker than him.

My reflex skill was at superior level 1 so even if the opponent was a martial arts master, I wouldn't be too pushed by the difference in skill.

I was able to verify this earlier in the ocean battle.

"Die-!"

Heising's loud roar could be heard all the way over here.

While flying straight towards me, Heising gathered a bunch of aura in his right fist.

At the same time as he arrived on the hilltop, he punched.

The instant his aura fist was thrown, I sensed how dangerous it was and immediately jumped up.

Kwa lu lu lu lung!!

The hilltop tumbled down. What incredible power.

I was momentarily alarmed at his display of strength but I immediately countered.

A whirlwind made of daggers surrounded my body as I approached Heising.

Heising then rushed at me with two aura fists.

Kwa kwa kwa Kwang!

Against the aura fists, the whirlwind of daggers began to fall apart.

I reshaped the torn dagger whirlwind and threw it at Heising.

Pa pa pa pa pat!

Standing on one foot, he spun his entire body out of the way to dodge the entirety of the dagger whirlwind.

Even in that unbalanced position, he kept his fists outstretched. It was amazing.

A created another whirlwind of daggers around my entire body and sent it flying at Heising. Then I stepped back and shout.

“Weapon, Neilson H, duel wield!”

In an instant, the guns appeared in both hands. I aimed at Heising, who was still dealing with the whirlwind, and fired.

Ta ta ta ta tang –

Heising protected himself with an aura shield around his entire body. The skill to individually deflect every bullet from two guns was too much, even for an aura master.

Kwaaaang!

The bullets ricocheted off the aura shield and into the whirlwind. The rocks and trees around us were ripped out of the ground and flew in all directions ‘Will I be able to penetrate his aura shield?’

With a sudden thought, I used Sylph’s power and concentrated it into the gun.

Aiming at Heising, the second I pulled the trigger, I focused on the expelling bullet.

Following the spiral of the bullet, I increased its rotation using Sylph’s power.

More! More!

The bullet, now with an incredible spin, shot forward at Heising.

Pa ji ji jik!

“Kuk!”

A portion of the protective shield was ripped open and Heising’s expression changed.

‘Success!’

I’ve created a new method of attack.

The idea is to continue to combine Sylph’s power into the shot until the bullet hits the target.

The further away the target, the more power I would have to use so it wasn’t very cost effective. But for a close distance fight, this skill was extremely efficient.

I used quite a bit of my Nature’s Power but it was enough to pierce the aura shield so I’ll consider that a success.

‘Good!’

Using this method I began to shoot both guns.

Taang! Tang! Tang!

Every time the Neilson H2 fired, it ripped a piece of Heising's aura protective shield.

Then how about this?

With careful adjustments, I fired continuously in one spot.

Taang-

“Kuk!”

Heising threw his body to the right and avoided the bullet.

The bullet passed through the protective shield and struck the tree behind Heising.

The tree, which was big enough that an adult wouldn't be able wrap their arms around, was shredded from one shot and fell down. If he hadn't dodged, that would have been Heising.

“Shit, were you hiding that still?”

“No, I just thought of this technique, what do you think?”

Heising, with teeth gritted, quickly stepped off the ground and ran at me. His plan was to not giving me any room to use the guns.

But using double guns in close range wasn't something new to me.

Paat!

I dodged Heising's fist and with the gun in my right hand, I aimed for his leg and shot.

Tang!

Heising moved his leg back and stood on one foot.

He reacted as soon as he saw the barrel of the gun point towards his leg.

From Heising's two fists, a flurry of fānziquán style punches rained down but I, with both arms surrounded by a strong whirlwind, faced it head on.



While trying to avoid the punches, I pulled the trigger as soon as I found a gap.

Heising too, at the moment I pulled the trigger, hit my arm and changed the direction of the barrel.

A fierce battle where two peoples' arms are dizzyingly entangled.

Tang—

Heising dodged by bending backwards.

Tang—

I aimed another shot at his leg but this time he placed one hand on the ground and flipped backwards while spinning in midair to delicately avoid it.

Tang!

Another shot was struck by his aura fist and Heising flung it away.

The aura fist was much stronger than the aura shield so even my shooting amplified with spirit summons could do nothing about it.

“Are you familiar with martial arts?”

Asked Heising all of a sudden.

“No, I’m just student.”

“I sense Chinese martial arts in your movements.”

At his words, there was something I remembered.

“I trained through the [mu ren zhuang](#), it must be that.”

(TLN: Wooden dummy with arms.)

Watching YouTube videos and training on the mu ren zhuang wasn’t time wasted!

That training technique was implemented into to the double guns shooting style and all I had practiced became ingrained in my fighting style.

On top of that, the 3 years on Brown Mountain enjoying tag with the elves gave me creativity and flexibility in my movements which also compounded on top of my superior level 1 reflex skill.

I hadn't spent a long time working on it, but who I was now could match Heising in martial arts.

"You have invented your own kind of martial arts. Impressive!"

A smile formed on Heising's lips.

What is that, that smile? What, now does he like me?

I was in a life and death battle, I didn't develop affection in that midst.

I shot again towards the smiling bastard's face.

Tang!

Immediately lowering his upper body and dodging, Heising raced towards me. He maintained his low posture like a low tackle in wrestling.

Pat!

I lightly jumped into air and shot my double guns.

Ta tang—

Heising dodged by spinning his body to the left and used the force of his spin to kick out at me.

Surprisingly, that kick was encased in aura.

Not only his fists but he seems to be able to also form aura around his feet.

Then this means he can freely to use aura in all limbs.

Kwaaaaang!

I protected myself with a whirlwind but my body flew into the sky from the impact of the kick. It felt like I was a soccer ball.

'Then!'

Flying through the air, I temporarily stopped synching with Sylph.

Then I summon my AW50F and fire at Heising.

“Sylph! Like the method before! Got it?”

-Meow!

The distance was just about 100 meters.

I'm thinking of shooting this 12.7 mm bullet with Sylph's power added to it.

A skill where Sylph's power was put into the bullet until it strikes a target.

The distance was a bit far so it would consume a lot of power but it's a large anti-material sniper rifle so it should have a much larger force than the pistols.

‘Now!’

Taaaang-!!

A piercing sound ripped through the air together with the bullet.

“Kuk!”

The 12.7 mm bullet, like ripping through paper, blasted through Heising's left shoulder.

“Sylph, just like now, keep attacking!”

-Meow!

“Kasa!”

-Bark!

Kasa appeared in midair.

“Synch!”

As if he had been waiting all along for those words, he jumped into my arms.

Hwa lu lu lu luk!

Like what the best warrior elf Derrek had shown me before, a flame blazed from my body.

“Divine Protection of Fire!”

With the Divine Protection of Fire in place, I raced towards Heising.

While I combined with Kasa and fought with Heising up close, Sylph took care of the long distance attacks!

The disappointing point was that the Divine Protection of Fire was only entry level 1 so the power increase from the spirit summons wasn't much.

But I discovered an unusual effect.

The Divine Protection of the Wind that lasted 3 hours was still in place.

With that alone, as if I was still combined with Sylph, I was able to freely use the power of the wind.

‘Before, stretching my arm and making a gust of wind with my fist was the limit.’

When I reached a higher mastery I would probably be able to use this skill more freely.

A skill that derives power from spirit summons. It must be because my spirit was at the superior level.

It felt like I had discovered a new world.

I held my pistols in both hands and concentrated my power.

Using Kasa's power, I added an extra explosion to my gunpowder.

And with the power of wind I endlessly spun the bullet!

Taang!

“Kuk!”

The bullet once again ripped through his aura shield like paper!

Heising barely moved back to dodge it with big flustered expression on his face.

I kept shooting my double guns as I lashed at Heising.

Heising was busy frantically dodging all of these attacks.

That instant,

Taang—

The shot rang through the sky.

The sound of the shot could be heard at the same time the bullet ripped through the air.

Kwa ji jik!

As it pierced through the aura shield.

Puk!

“Ku huk!”

Struck on the right shoulder!

Heising let out a pained scream.

‘Now!’

Seeing the chance of victory I continued shooting the double guns.

Because my Nature Energy was slowly starting to reach the bottom, I let out a volley of bullets.

Heising slid to the right to dodged and shouted something.

A healing potion appeared in his hand.

The bastard stood up and poured the healing potion onto his right shoulder.

‘Gotta hand it to him.’

In that short time, while performing an intense evasion

movement, he had the sense to grab his healing potion.

He must have itemized a healing potion in preparation for a dangerous moment like this But just now, succeeding in my attack, I had thought of a way I could kill Heising.

‘Simpler than I thought.’

I sent my idea to Sylph who was up in the sky aiming the AW50F.

I got the affirmation of Sylph understanding, delivered to my mind.

I shot both guns at Heising.

Heising grit his teeth and raised his aura in both fists.

“This is the end.”

I said.

“Arrogant bastard.”

“For real. I’ll say it beforehand but I have no personal grudge against you. Rather, Lee Chang-wee has a lot of resentment towards you?”

One of Heising’s eyebrows twitched.

“What did you hear from Lee Chang-wee?”

“Isn’t it obvious? Why do you think Lee Chang-wee is at the pirate headquarters?”

I lied as if I was cooperating with Lee Chang-wee.

It was a plan to throw Heising’s thoughts in disarray.

“Lee chang-wee, that bastard!”

As I wanted, Heising broke out in a wild rage.

When your soul was shaken, gaps that weren’t there would form.

Planning for the ultimate blow, I kept talking.

“How is it you think I knew what time you guys would be

attacking? Don't you suspect someone from your side is revealing information?"

“.....!”

Heising made an ugly face at that comment.

And then I made my move.

# Chapter 137 – Harbor battle (Part 3)

---

It was the time for victory. I started making huge, flashy movements.

I raised both guns and adjusted their aim.

One at Heising's head. This tactic was to draw Heising's attention.

The other was aimed at the top portion of the aura net encompassing Heising.

Taang, tang!

Heising moved how I wanted him to. Reflexively, he just moved his head to the side and dodged while keeping his body in place.

But yet another bullet broke the top portion of his aura net.

And at the same time, Sylph shot the AW50F.

Taaaang!!

The aura net ripped from the bullet I shot and, through that gap, dove in the 12.7mm bullet.

Puuk!

“Kuuk!”

Heising's appalling scream rang out.

‘Done!’

I got a thrilling pleasure.

Heising collapsed. From his back, red blood poured out spilling everywhere. A fatal injury.

‘Normally, the attack is so powerful that getting shot like that would cause someone to go flying. But maybe because he's an aura master his body is heavier than a normal human's?’

The fact he didn't die instantly proved how amazing Heising's



body was.

But with this, my victory was confirmed.

While aiming both my guns at Heising, I cautiously approached.

I kicked away the healing potion Heising was holding.

“Kuk.....!”

As the agony was overwhelming him, Heising simply grit his teeth.

Barely having turned his body, looking up at the sky, Heising blatantly stared at the gun I was holding.

“So I’ve lost.....”

“Yes.”

“I didn’t know I would die so soon.....”

Heising let out a quiet sigh.

“Rather, you’re accepting your death a bit too easily.”

“During the fight..... I knew.... I had a feeling I’d lose.”

‘I see.’

Me too.

I had a feeling while we were fighting that I would end up as the winner.

Exactly when was when I realized I had the shooting power to rip through his aura net.

From that moment on I felt confident. So far, the skills and training I had experienced, it was the perfect culmination for this fight.

On the other hand, Heising running into someone like me for the first time caused him to lose his composure.

“Let me ask..... one thing.”

“Ask.”

“What you said earlier... Kul luk (cough)!”

In the middle of talking, Heising vomited blood.

He grit his teeth hard and continued speaking.

“Martial artist..... did you say his name was Kang Chun-sung?”

“So?”

“Is he not Chang Tian Seong?”

“I don’t know. I didn’t ever hear it in Chinese. Anyway, he was from Shanghai and trained in the fānziquán and Bāguà Zhǎng (eight trigrams) style.”

“Bāguà Zhǎng .... Then it is.....”

As if shocked from absurdity, Heising laughed.

“When I was young, he was a neighborhood Hyung I knew well..... we learned martial arts together..... he was skilled enough to be a teacher.”

Heising’s voice kept softening.

“He was a really strong person..... someone like him is on the other side. Haha..... I guess I’ll see everyone there. Sure..... everyone eventually meets there again.....”

Then his voice stopped.

I put my hand to his neck. I couldn’t get a pulse.

It was a surprise that he knew Kang Chun-seong.

There was that connection.

A guy like this, thinking about his childhood right before death. I can’t even describe my feelings at the thought.

But just like that, I got rid of Heising.

Let alone be burned to the ground, the hill we were on was only half of its original height. Standing atop it, I stared blankly into

the distance.

I don't know how long I'll have to fight like this for.

'I should have just killed him quickly. I had to listen to useless banter for no reason.'

I feel disgusted and sad.

I sighed.

But I have to keep fighting. Because we haven't won yet.

I called out to Sylph who was up in the sky.

Then I laid down and prepared to shoot.

Tang!

Any pirate I could see that was standing out, I shot no matter what.

Especially with dark hair and yellow skin, I killed them without hesitation. It was because they had a high chance of being corrupt examinees from the Chinese examinee group.

How many did I kill in this fashion?

At the shooting started again, the pirates seemed to have realized that Heising had been defeated.

The pirates who invaded the harbor with confidence began to retreat like a low tide.

I didn't stop shooting until the bastards were on their boats and retreating.

I thought of destroying all the ships so they couldn't leave the harbor but I decided not to.

My energy was almost at rock bottom.

If the Chinese, who had lost their path to escape, decided to relentlessly counter my attack, I would have no choice but to suffer.

Deng deng deng-! Deng deng deng-! Deng deng deng-!

The bells rang consecutively.

With that, loud yelling from the harbor could be heard.

We've won.

Paat!

Right next to me, the exam door appears. The exams been cleared.

Ring, ring.

The transponder rang.

I picked it up and it was Cha Ji-hye.

-Are you safe?

“Yes, are you safe as well?”

-Yes, the exam door has appeared next to me. But did you get rid of Heising?

“Yes, barely. My door has appeared too.”

-Before we return, we need to return the radios and synthetic muscle suits.

“Then first of all I'll meet you at the inn.”

-Yes.

I raced towards the Deport harbor.

The harbor was crowded.

The people that had evacuated outside of the city had heard the sounds of victory and were coming back in.

In order to blend in, I darted between them and quietly made my way into the harbor.

But as soon as I appeared, the soldiers pointed to me and shouted.

“It's our hero!”

“He led us to victory!”

“He is a disciple? Of the count of Wolfenbrooke!”

And then the people started to gather around me.

“Wowww!”

“Hurray-!”

“Hurry for the hero!!”

People looked at me and rejoiced and clapped.

With all the sudden attention, I feel embarrassed and scratched my head before escaping the scene.

People on both sides made way for me but didn't forget to clap and rejoice for me.

Like that, feeling as if I was a general returning from war, I returned to the inn.

“You've returned.”

“Yes.”

Cha Ji-hye must already have changed all her clothes because she handed me her synthetic muscle suit and radio.

I think her scent was slightly embedded in the synthetic muscle suit and it made me embarrassed.

“What is the matter?”

“Huh? Oh, it's nothing.”

“Is it because it smells?”

“Ku huk! Um, no! It's not a bad smell.....!”

Only after saying that much did I realize I've dug my own grave.

“That's a relief that at least it doesn't smell bad.”

Kuaccck!

Her businesslike tone made me more embarrassed.

I felt like she laughed a little, but there was no way to verify if it was my own delusion.

“I’ll wait outside, you change too.”

“Yes.....”

While Cha Ji-hye waited outside, I sighed at myself while taking off the synthetic muscle suit.

After I put all the suits and radios into the virtual space bag, I called Cha Ji-hye back in.

“Board summon.”

Cha ji-hye summoned her board and said.

“I will end the exam.”

Paat!

And then the exam door appeared.

We opened the door and in turn, headed through it.

\*\*\*

Bboo-boo-

“Congratulations!”

Welcomed the baby angel, obnoxiously blowing his trumpet.

“Your repertoire is too predictable, can you do anything else?”

I asked and the baby angel said.

“Then next time I’ll blow some fireworks.

“Do what you want.”

“Anyway, examinee Kim Hyun-ho. Wow, this time too you had a big role, no?”

“You keep giving me exams I can’t pass unless I go big.”

“So did that make it impossible?”

“..... It was possible which is why I’m alive.”

“See. How many times have I said we don’t give impossible exams.”

I suddenly got a bad feeling.

“By any chance.”

“Yes.”

“...?!”

“That maybe that you are thinking of...that’s right.”

The baby angel read my mind and replied first.

I felt I had a long way to go.

The question I wanted to ask was this.

I’ve become must stronger from this exam. Does that mean the next exam’s difficulty will be increased by how much stronger I’ve become?

The answer was apparently yes.

This wicked exam system predicted how much I’ll grow and gave me an exam I would barely be able to pass.

“On top of that, examinee Cha Ji-hye has also gathered quite a large sum of karma, that will probably be included (in the next exam grading) as well. Get the wrong amount of karma and you’re in trouble.”

I got an urge to shoot the annoyingly smiling baby angel.

“Now now, go home and rest comfortably. Regrettably, I’ll see you again in 100 days!”

I guess the rest period will be 100 days again.

\*\*\*

We’re back in reality.

Having awoken in the Nordic exam group headquarters basement, I felt a sense of safety.

‘Should I see how much I got?’

I killed a lot of corrupt examinees, I perfectly cleared the exam too and looked forward to seeing how much karma I got.

It was when I was about to summon my board.

Kwang Kwang Kwang!

Someone outside was roughly banging on the door.

“Hyun-ho! Open the door Hyun-ho!”

It was Marie Johanna.

I sighed.

As soon as I opened the door,

Plunge!

Like a protective charm she hugged me.

“I missed you!”

Marie was hanging around my neck like a sloth and wrapped her legs around my waist and lightly moved towards my back even.

“How are you Marie? Did you clear your exam?”

“Yup! But it was tiring having to be by Odin the whole time.”

Right.

Marie’s mission was to personally protect Odin. If Odin returned safe and sound, Marie would clear her exam.

“Mr. Kim Hyun-ho!”

Odin’s lively voice rang out.

Also cleared the exam, Odin welcomed me.

“Did you eradicate the pirates?”

“Yes, and I got rid of Heising. Have you heard of Heising?”

Then Odin’s face was overcome with shock.



“Heising, ranked 13th in the world for having the most karma?”

“13th?”

“Yes. According to the records released by the Chinese exam group last year. He became a corrupt examinee and afterwards was not able to gain karma so his rank fell, but at one point he was ranked 8th in the world.”

I had no idea he was such big fish.

Then again, he must have been which is why he was rivals with Lee Chang-wee.

“Amongst the Chinese examinees, he was the viable rival for Lee Chang-wee, I had no idea you would get rid of someone as big as him!”

Odin looked at me with surprise.

I’m now an 8th turn examinee.

That I could fight and win over a top 10 ranked publicized person, it was interesting enough.

‘So Heising was ranked 13th in the world?’

I gained confidence.

In a full on combat battle against Heising, without resorting to any trickery, I was able to win.

Now, I don’t have to be conscientious of others’ gaze and I can say I’m a strong person!

“If Heising is dead, the Chinese examinees are now under the sole control of Lee Chang-wee.”

I thought the same.

Not on purpose but I have helped Lee Chang-wee achieve the situation he wanted.

For me, I just did my best to clear my exam but eventually, the benefits would be returned to Lee Chang-wee.

‘But for me too, my situation has improved quite a bit compared to before.’

I killed Heising.

Even for Lee Chang-wee who couldn’t belittle a strong person Heising, killing him cemented my own strength.

Meaning Lee Chang-wee could no longer think so little of me either.

From the position of Lee Chang-wee, who has achieved his goal, there was no reason to have me as an enemy anymore.

Following that, when Lee Chang-wee has complete control of the Chinese examinees they won’t come after me anymore.

‘Anyway, let’s see how much karma I got.’

I summoned my board.

# Chapter 138 – After Returning (Part 1)

---

-Name: Kim Hyun-ho

-Class: 40

-Karma: +41,000

-Mission: rest until the next exam

-Time limit: 99 days 23 hours

My mouth dropped wide open.

Is this how you feel when you win the lottery?

First, I suspected something was wrong with my eyes, then I started suspecting that this was a dream, that perhaps I was mistaken.

Only then did I get the surge in my chest!

She must have seen my expression because Marie came close enough for our lips to touch, stared me in the face, and asked.

“Hyun-ho, did you get lots of karma? Hmm?”

“Yes, yes, um give me some room please.”

“Why?”

“Our lips are about to touch.”

“Uh huh.”

Instantly, Marie’s eyes changed to that of a playful kitten. And then she leaned forward and touched her lips to mine.

There wasn’t even time to stop her. Oh man, this mentally ill woman..... if she wasn’t pretty I would’ve punched her.

Then.

“How are your results?”

“Uack!”

I was then frightened as I heard the especially businesslike voice right behind me.

“Why are you so startled?”

Cha Ji-hye expressed her indifference.

“Oh, nothing. I just got a surprising amount of karma is all.”

I floundered for an explanation.

It almost seemed like Cha Ji-hye had a twinkle in her eyes.

“I am glad. This time too I received good results.”

“Really?”

“The exam grade, I had less of a role than you did Mr. Kim Hyun-ho so it didn’t meet my expectation. But I eliminated 3 corrupt examinees in exchange.”

“Three?”

I was surprised.

Honestly, the process I’ve made was abnormal. But Cha Ji-hye, who didn’t have such a monstrous amount of growth, fought against veterans who had been in the Arena for much longer.

Not just fought, but that she killed three of them was impressive.

“I saw a lot of benefit to the synthetic muscle suit. With 20 times the strength and attack power, the opponents weren’t able to properly defend themselves.”

I see.

The synthetic muscle suits multiplies the power times 20 so for Cha Ji-hye, who attacks with double swords, it offered a lot of benefits.

If the opponent has swirling swords and her power is 20 times what I expect is to be, how would that feel? Everyone would be terrified.

Well, Cha Ji-hye is smart, she wouldn't have picked a fight she couldn't win.

“Anyway, shall we choose our karma prizes?”

“Let's.”

“Now now, that's good and all but what do you say about eating first?”

Odin interrupted with a suggestion.

Now that I thought of it, we fought all day and hadn't eaten yet. All we had was the fish we grilled with Vincent.

I nodded my head and Cha Ji-hye agreed too. We ate our meal together in the cafeteria.

Was it perhaps in celebration of our return from the exams?

The cafeteria was rather generous.

With medium rare steaks, pizzas, spaghetti, enough food to kill you, the tables were stacked with food.

Marie's eyes lit on fire while her fork and knife started moving at an incredible pace. With a small build but such an appetite, even I was surprised.

Odin looked at Marie like a father would, smiling.

“She looks alright but she worked hard. Day and night she kept an eye out on my surroundings, she couldn't relax to eat or sleep properly.”

At that unexpected report, I looked to Marie.

She was like a child – with no patience and throwing tantrums. It was unexpected that she was a killer and hardened fighter.

“It must've been hard.”

“Yep! It was really hard.”

Marie mumbled like so and clung to me.

I brushed her hair. Marie laughed and as if to ask for more, shoved her head at me.

We were eating when Odin suddenly suggested something to me.

“What do you think of registering for the world rankings?”

“Would there be a point to those rankings? There are many examinees who conceal their true power, and it's not that the amount of karma necessarily equals an examinee's skills either.”

Odin laughed at my words.

“Of course, amongst examinees, it doesn't really hold that much meaning. As you say, everyone keeps their skills to themselves.”

“So is there any meaning of registering in the rankings?”

“There is.”

Said Odin with confidence.

“The agencies divulge information to each other, the reason for ranking examinees with their total karma is one reason.”

“What is that?”

“It is to serve as a reference index for the investors in Arena-related business. If you surprise the rankings with your sudden high ranking, it'll make an impression on the big controlling investors in Arena.”

“Hm.....”

“If you become a big figure, no one can think of you as small fish anymore.”

At those words, Cha Ji-hye nodded her head and added to it.

“The Korean Arena Research Agency won't be able to just do whatever to you anymore either.”

“Really?”

“Of course. The Korean Arena Research Agency is the national

agency but in terms of the world Arena business, it's isn't considered to be an agency with much power."

Well, it's not a powerful group which is why they work with China.

"That a top talent examinee such as yourself was lost by the Korean Arena Research Agency, it will definitely be a mark against Chief Kim Joon-Tae. The government's confidence in Chief Kim Joong-Tae will be shaken."

And if Chief Kim Joong-tae gets dismissed from his position, then I could make a deal with the new chief and it'll even be possible to restore Cha Ji-hye's identity.

"I'll think about it. I don't think it's a bad idea."

I'm already well known enough due to my healing ability anyway.

To just come out as a strong player at this point doesn't sound like a bad idea.

We finished our meal and together with Cha Ji-hye we discussed our karma.

"41,000 karma?"

"Yes."

It looked like Cha Ji-hye was surprised at the amount of karma I got this turn.

But then, as if in agreement, she nodded her head.

"Then again, the success of clearing this exam was dependent on your role and in addition to Heising, you eliminated many other corrupt examinees, it is only to be expected."

"Yes, I was very lucky."

"It is your skill. This past fight, from the beginning to the end, it was all your skills."

Ah.....

Why does it feel so good to be complimented by this woman.

I scratched my head in embarrassment.

“First, I’m thinking of investing my karma to strengthen my spirit summons.”

The first thing I thought of was the Divine Protection of Fire.

Through the Divine Protection of the Wind when I synthesized with Sylph, our power grew three-fold.

In the same manner, mastering the Divine Protection of Fire and synthesizing with Kasa, I’m thinking that I’ll get about the same boost in strength.

‘The way I used Sylph to come up with a new shooting plan, could there not be a way to do that with Kasa?’

The method of using Sylph’s power until the bullet hit its target, that’s how I penetrated Heising’s aura protection net.

By using Sylph’s power to exponentially strengthen the power of the bullet.

But Kasa’s power, other than increasing the explosiveness of the gun powder, there wasn’t really any other use for it.

I’ll have to think about this one a bit more.

Anyway, I invested my karma in mastering the Divine Protection of Fire.

“Board summon, show me how much karma it will take to raise Divine Protection of Fire to mastery.”

Then the explanation appeared on the board.

– Divine Protection of Fire (synthesis skill) to raise to mastery, the karma needed is as follows.

– Divine Protection of Fire (synthesis skill): stir up flames with your body. It is influenced by the user’s concentration and skill



level plus the spirit's skill level.

\*Master: 3 hours a day

-To master, uses 5,400 karma.

-Remaining karma: +41,000

The Divine Protection of Fire was like the Divine Protection of the Wind.

With mastery, the cool down disappeared and it was just the three hour limit per day, free to use in that span of time.

“I’ll master it.”

I said to the board.

-Using 5,400 karma to raise Divine Protection of Fire to mastery.

-Remaining karma: +35,600

Pat!

A light sparkled from the board and seeped into my body.

Good, I’ve mastered the Divine Protection of Fire, now what skill should I raise?

“Show me how many levels I can raise my spirit summons to.”

-Displaying the instance in using all karma to raise spirit summons (main skill).

-Spirit summons (main skill): summon a superior spirit and express the power of nature, utilize power of nature yourself and the physical body becomes stronger.

\*Spirits available to summon: Sylph, Kasa

\*Superior level 8: summon time 17 hours, combine with your spirit and express powers through your own body.

-Spirit summons (main skill) to superior level 8 will use 33,600 karma.

-Remaining karma: +35,600

‘Superior level 8.....’

Currently I have spirit summons superior level 1.

Getting to superior level 8 in one leap, I’m sure the increase in power will be explosive.

But I’ve already mastered the Divine Protection of the Wind and Divine Protection of Fire skills so the spirit summons is already 3 times as powerful.

When I fought with Heising, at least in terms of power, I wasn’t lacking.

If I raised my spirit summons level here and raised my power, rather, I wonder if it would not be more effective to invest in another skill.

For example, in my reflex skill or my dynamic visual acuity.

It won’t take too much karma to synthesize my reflex skill and dynamic visual acuity to mastery since they’re synthesized skills.

I’ll have to check that out.

“Show me the karma needed to master the reflex skill.”

-Reflex skill (synthesis skill) to master, showing karma needed.

-Reflex skill (synthesis skill): improved ability to maneuver the body.

\*Mastery: become a master in all things requiring body movement.

-To raise to mastery will use 8,000 karma.

-Remaining karma: 35,600

Now that I think of it, I’ll look at the dynamic visual acuity skill too.

– Dynamic visual acuity (synthesis skill) to master showing the karma needed.

– Dynamic visual acuity (synthesis skill): able to see a fast moving object.

\*Mastery: Precognition. See the flow of a fast moving object ahead of time.

-To master will use 11,600 karma.

-Remaining karma: 35,600

‘Precognition? See ahead?’

So if someone were to attack with their sword, I would be able to anticipate its path?

I asked Cha Ji-hye for her opinion.

“You must master the reflex and dynamic visual acuity skill.”

“Really?”

“Of course. You can see where your opponent will go and what they are planning on doing. And if you add the reflex skill on top of that, you will become unstoppable in close combat.”

She continued.

“On top of that, it is my understanding that you also gain the foresight skill.”

“Yes.”

Foresight was the synthesis skill I got last time.

It’s a skill from the synthesis of the guider and 357 magnum bullets, and it had the effect of being able to anticipate the enemy’s long distance attack.”

“If you add them all, wouldn’t you have nothing to fear either from long distance or close combat?”

“..... You’re right.”

I decided to master the reflex and eye skill.

-With 8,000 karma, the reflex (synthesis skill) has been raised to

mastery.

-With 11,600 karma, the dynamic visual acuity (synthesis skill) has been raised to mastery.

-Remaining karma: +16,000

I mastered the reflex and eye skills. I wanted to test them out immediately.

## Chapter 139 – After Returning (Part 2)

---

“Would you please spar with me for a bit?”

“Sounds good.”

We lightly started sparring with bare hands.

She doesn't have her double swords but her original specialty was Muay Thai.

As soon as we stood facing each other she came at me throwing front kicks with no restraints.

A fast offense with no preparatory movements But suddenly, the leg that was stretched out towards my trunk appeared as a hazy image.

It surprised me and I dodged backwards a step.

“I will continue.”

Cha Ji-hye ran forward and boldly approached with a one two combination.

The same thing happened this time as well.

The punches heading towards my face...I saw them ahead of time as a hazy image.

Using that hazy image, I easily dodged.

‘This is the effect of mastering the dynamic visual acuity!’

That hazy image is showing me where her attack will go before it happens.

“Don't pay attention to my defense, just attack as fast as you can please. I'll just keep dodging.”

“Will do.”

Cha Ji-hye got way up close and relentlessly started attacking with kicks and punches.

Despite the close distance which made it hard to evade, I dodged all her attacks.

Following her one two jabs with a sharp middle kick combo, I easily evaded.

She slowly began to use advanced skills. She threw a feint with her fists but then struck with her elbow. But it didn't work on me.

As all the attacks were blocked, Cha Ji-hye stopped attacking.

“Do you see all my attacks?”

“Yes.”

“It is a strange feeling.”

“What is?”

“I remember sparring like this not too long ago.”

“Ah.....”

When I was a newbie just past my second turn, I had sparred with Cha Ji-hye.

Back then she relentlessly countered my every move and then beat me to a pulp.

“To me that was 16 years ago.”

“It is four years for me too.”

The discrepancy of time.

Yet recalling this memory together.

Now I've grown enough to dodge all her attacks.

In reality, it had only been a year but to us it has become something of a memory.

“Let's go one more time.”

When the strange atmosphere settled in, Cha Ji-hye opened her mouth. Only then did I too snap out of the reverie.

“Ah, yes.”

Cha Ji-hye attempted to attack again. Fast and short without pause, the rapid fire punching continued without end.

With varied directions, a tsunami of punches were aimed at my face.

But through the dynamic visual acuity mastery, everything looked slow and I could see where the punch would be headed.

Like answering questions while looking at the answer key, I moved my head left and right and dodged all the punches.

But then that second, Cha Ji-hye's left jab with a low kick hit me in the shin.

Puk!

I flinched.

Thanks to the energy of nature flowing in my body the pain was somewhat subdued but I couldn't help but be surprised.

“You've become too focused on only what you see that you've become vulnerable to the attacks beyond your scope of vision.”

“Ah, I see.”

Technique wise, we both had reflex mastery so I was no worse than Cha Ji-hye.

But I realized that mentally I was careless and suffered the consequences.

My mentality can't be covered just but skills skills alone.

This was probably the biggest difference between basic examinee and a martial artist examinee like Lee Chang-wee.

“Could we try again one more time please.”

“Of course.”

Cha Ji-hye started attacking again. This time, I carefully dodged

even the attacks coming from beyond my peripheral vision.

But then, at some point, Cha Ji-hye drew my attention with a right hook while rushing towards me.

Just like that she came right into me and lifted me off the ground.

As for me I tried not to be lifted and tried to lower my center of gravity in defense but her oddly powerful strength lifted me up anyway.

‘.....?!’

Just like that Cha Ji-hye flung me back to the ground.

I was surprised at how strong she is.

She wasn’t even wearing the synthetic muscle suit, but I was properly thrown even while trying to shift my center of gravity. She forcefully lifted and threw me down!

Cha Ji-hye got on top of me and punched.

Pat!

I turned my head and dodged and with two arms I hugged her.

I had never really learned Jiu Jitsu or wrestling but due to the reflex skill in my body, I instinctively defend myself with this action.

While tangled up and flopping about on the floor, I suddenly asked.

“Did you raise your physical strength buff?

“Yes, to superior level 1.”

Wha.....

Superior level 1 vs intermediate level 5. That’s why she was able to destroy me using pure strength.

But her grappling wasn’t as proficient as her Muay Thai.



I quickly shrimped out and grabbed her by the hips from behind.

Holding her tight, we spun in half a circle and I flipped Cha Ji-hye. From a top and bottom position I started punching.

Of course, my punch stopped right before hitting her face.

“Your weakness is grappling.”

“You should keep that in mind. Try to remember to keep your distance while fighting.”

“I suppose I should.”

When the conversation stopped, that strange atmosphere began to flow again.

Now we were in very close to each other, lying right next to each other.

Her scent was effervescing.

That provocative smell I smelled when she took off her synthetic muscle suit.

“....”

“....”

A strong face with defined features. Her short haircut matched well with her pretty face.

Big eyes capable of diverse emotion, they strengthened the stiffness of her expressionless face.

Seeing her this up close, Cha Ji-hye was extremely beautiful.

Cha Ji-hye’s two large eyes quietly examined me.

She, in her special businesslike tone, did not ask me to move.

She just stayed still, looking at me.

I got the feeling what I was being sucked into her gaze.

My mind went blank.

My face slowly approached her face.

Our lips touched.

Cha Ji-hye accepted my lips on hers. As we basked in each other, she just quietly looked at me.

Then at some point, she took her right hand and stroked my hair. That was her signal and she began kissing more passionately than I.

A long while after.

We parted lips and looked at each other.

“Shall we return home?”

I asked.

“Yes.”

Cha Ji-hye agreed.

As if our hearts had been connected we got up from our spots.

I had returned to my dorms and packed all my clothes into my bag and got a plane ticket headed for Korea.

It was a sudden decision but there were lots of first class seats, so I was easily able to reserve one.

At the news of our sudden departure Odin, on behalf of the Nordic exam group, expressed his disappointment but promised to meet up with each other before our 100 days were up.

Marie threw a fit saying she wanted to come too but I left her behind as we departed.

At the international Copenhagen airport, we boarded our flight and left Denmark.

During the entire plane ride while heading for Korea, Cha Ji-hye and I didn't say a word.

It wasn't an awkward silence.

As if we had made a promise to each other, we simply kept our mouths shut.

We arrived at the Incheon international airport and rode a taxi and arrived in Bucheon.

On our way on up the elevator, my heart began to thump louder.

My breath became ragged.

In case she caught on to my excitement, I didn't look her in the eye.

But I pushed in my passcode and right when we had walked into the house, we dropped our bags in the entryway and hugged each other.

We strongly indulged in each other, our tongues tangling up. And when our lips met I picked her up.

I let her down onto the bed. While we kept kissing, one by one, we took off our clothes.

Hearing her panting breath, it turned me on.

Her emotional appearance that would never lose its calm in any type of situation.

Inside my heart there was a large hole.

The time spent in the Arena on exams.

But when back in reality, all of time felt like a lie because not a day had passed here.

And that had been repeated over and over.

The times spent that I couldn't share with anyone.

Odin and Marie, too, were merely working together but weren't friends that bickered and shared their thoughts with one another.

Min-jeong, who I liked so much, eventually couldn't fill this hole. Now that I think back on it I think I had just been lonely all this time.

But right this moment.

I had the feeling of something warm filling up that wide empty hole in my chest.

Cha Ji-hye spent much longer than me in the Arena.

I put her in my empty space and she too filled hers with me.

Together, hot, tangled, in the heat of the moment. That's what that was.

Neither sweet nor erotic, we were merely lusty for something, fulfilling our own greed with each other.

\*\*\*

I had the physical strength buff intermediate level 5.

Cha Ji-hye had an impressive superior level 1.

For us to be exhausted and having to catch our breaths, how much time had passed?

"I am hungry."

Those were the first words Cha Ji-hye has said since returning to Korea.

Out of the blue, I laughed. As if the strange atmosphere between us had been washed off and disappeared.

"Me too."

"We have to make rice but we haven't gone shopping so there's nothing else to make."

"Should we just eat out?"

"I think that's best."

We got out from under the covers and crawled out of bed.

Her figure, that didn't have a single thread on it, came into my vision.

Without a single bit of fat, it was a well-trained and well-toned

figure. I felt as if she was a complete beauty, as if she had been carved out.

‘I slept with a woman like this?’

I am a man like any other perhaps. I felt a sense of accomplishment when seeing her.

Cha Ji-hye, with her body bare, was still confident.

I showered in the bathroom attached to my bedroom and Cha Ji-hye washed up in the hall bathroom.

Getting dressed, I checked my phone.

Three missed calls.

There are messages too, just from Hyun-ji.

‘What now?’

I first check it.

[Hyun-ji: Oppa, still in Denmark?]

[Hyun-ji: when are you back in korea?]

[Hyun-ji: Pick up your phone!!]

Contacting me so persistently. It seemed she wanted something.

I thought of just ignoring it but I thought of the blackmail Hyun-ji was holding onto.

My family thinks I’m dating Cha Ji-hye. If Hyun-ji tattles about this to Min-jeong.....!

‘She probably won’t tell but they tell each other everything.’

I feared the consequences and I called Hyun-ji.

-Oppa~!

The aegyo in Hyun-ji’s voice was disgusting.

“You’re still not sleeping?”

-What do you mean sleeping, its only 11pm. Where are you oppa?

Still in Denmark?

“I’m in Korea. I just got back today.”

-Really? Are you at home now?

“I’m about to go out with Ji-hye right now. We’re hungry.”

-Good, good. Me too!

“Did you not hear what I said? I’m about to head out with Ji-hye. Cuz we’re hungry.”

-Yup yup, I’m hungry too.

“It’s just us two and you want to be squished in there?”

-There’s something important to tell you that’s why, ok?

“.....”

I lost all words at Hyun-ji’s thoughtlessness.

But from behind I heard Cha Ji-hye’s voice.

“It is fine with me.”

-See, she says its ok, hehehe.

She heard, so brazen.

I sighed.

I told her I would be by to pick her up soon.

# Chapter 140 – Ranker (Part 1)

---

It had been a long time since I drove in the Porsche cayenne.

I sat Cha Ji-hye in the passenger seat and as we departed, I asked her.

“Aren’t you bothered?”

“Not at all.”

She was the same when Marie clung to me all the way to Korea, she’s oddly tolerant to these things.

“You’re oddly not annoyed by people.”

“I’m not the type to want to be alone on purpose. Plus, she’s cute.”

“What?”

I was suspicious of my own ears for a second.

“Your little sister, she’s cute.”

Saying Hyun-ji is cute, Cha Ji-hye’s head is an extraordinary place.

The car arrived quickly at Hyun-ji’s place. I sent her a text to come out and she quickly ran out.

“Oraboni!”\*

(TN: Old/historical version of oppa.)

“Don’t do that, that kind of speech.”

“Awwww.”

Hyun-ji sat in the back seat and, audaciously, was super friendly to Cha Ji-hye.

“Hi, unit!”

“Yes, its been a long time, miss.”

“Hehe, you can just call me Hyun-ji.”

“Yes, miss Hyun-ji.”

“Aw, you can just call me Hyun-ji. Miss is too much.”

“Got it.”

I almost burst out laughing.

It was because, in an instant, her tone changed to how an army superior would talk to you.

Hyun-ji, who wanted a close unni-sister relationship, looked a bit sour. In a moments time she became the soldier of this ranked officer.

“Anything you want to eat?”

“Um, in the Bucheon neighborhood there is a pasta specialty shop that is open late.”

I drove towards the Bucheon district.

We got to the pasta specialty shop and sat down and ordered.

“What is it you wanted to ask that you begged to meet at this hour?”

“Hey, is there a reason for a cute little sister to miss her oppa?”

“You wanna get hit?”

“Hehe don’t be embarrassed. Aren’t you proud and happy you have such a cute little sis?”

I clenched my fist to the point a vessel might pop.

I had to try hard to hold in my annoyance.

Hyun-ji giggled and laughed while she said to Cha Ji-hye.

“Oppa’s like this. He’s shy so he can’t be honest. You must be having a hard time dating him, unni.”

“Not really.”



“Hoho, you’re the same as him.”

“Is that so? I don’t really know.”

While we ate, Hyun-ji began to ask this and that about us and every time, I felt a sense of embarrassment.

With her special kind of brazenness, Cha Ji-hye answered easily with lies, and it amazed me.

And looking at it, the current Cha Ji-hye and our relationship was very undefined.

There were many things that happened but it’s because I felt like we weren’t actually dating.

Rather it felt like we had just climbed a hill and come back down is all.

“Oppa, honestly, actually.....”

Now Hyun-ji finally started getting to why she wanted to meet.

“Speak.”

“Hehe, actually, I’ve been thinking a lot about my future.”

“If you fail all the employee admits for the first half year, that is understandable.”

“Hmph! Don’t twist my words, listen to me for real.”

“Alright, alright, keep going.”

“Ok. I’ve been giving it a lot of thought and a person should do what they’re good at doing. So, I thought ‘what are my talents and aptitudes, what genre would I like?’”

“And?”

“And it just so happens that my friend Ji-hyun told me something about.”

“And what is that?”

“An unni she knows set up an online shopping mall and makes

tons of money.”

“.....”

“So, I’m thinking about setting up an online shopping mall too with Ji-hyun.”

“That is your aptitude?”

“Yup! I do have a killer fashion sense.”

I was at a loss for words.

This kid couldn’t get employed and now she’s lost her mind.

Does anyone just set up an internet mall?

And her only pro is that her she thinks she has good fashion sense?

“But to do something like that needs business capital, lots of capital. So, I was thinking..... hehe, maybe oppa, you could invest.....”

I took out my smartphone.

“Oppa?”

I firmly pressed the numbers and hit the call button.

The call sound rang out.

“Oppa, um, who are you calling right now?”

I easily ignored Hyun-ji’s scared question and put the smartphone to my ear.

-Hello?

A cold speech, no less than Cha Ji-hye’s, could be heard on the other end.

“Noona, it’s me.”

-You’re back in Korea?

“Yea, I returned today. But I’m talking with Hyun-ji right

now.....”

“Kyaak! Oppa!”

Stricken white, Hyun-ji jumped out her seat and screamed.

Whether she does or not, I continued to say.

“She’s saying she wants to set up an internet mall and is asking me for investment capital.”

-..... where are you?

Noona’s chilly voice practically froze my ear.

“A pasta restaurant in Bucheon district.”

-Text me the address. I’m coming right now.

“Okay.”

After I hung up I texted the address to noona.

Hyun-ji’s face was stricken with terror. Then, with a voice full of sorrow and resentment, she started yelling at me.

“Oppa, that’s too much! How could you!”

“Think about this carefully. If this is something you are sincerely considering, start by convincing noona. If she approves, I’ll give you the capital.”

It’s not that I find the money rotting away in the Swiss bank account to be too precious to give her. What I’m worried about was your mental state, my child.

“You think unni will listen to what I have to say? She’ll just grill me to make fried chicken with mom!”

“It’s all for your own good, you think she’ll push you without considering what you want? Convince noona with your carefulness and determination to earn her approval, show me you can do that.”

“Hiing, unni is scary! She’s just going to yell at me!”

“Honestly, looking at your current situation you can’t get a job, mom has a store and you don’t want it, it just sounds like you’re using an internet mall to try and escape your current predicament.”

“.....”

Hyun-ji began to sulk.

I sighed and pat Hyun-ji’s head.

“So, I’m saying, prove it. If you really mean it and you’re going to work for it, oppa will help.”

“Whatever!”

She whined and then began to cry.

We left the restaurant and talked in a nearby 24-hour café.

Then noona arrived.

“Hyun-ji.”

As soon as noona arrived, she open her mouth with chilling speech.

Hyun-ji was all tense and, like a private, she stood at attention as soon as she spoke.

“Let’s go. We need to have a sincere talk with mom.”

“Oh, okay.”

Hyun-ji barely mustered up some courage and followed noona out.

Just like that, noona took our family trouble maker and disappeared into the wind.

In the café, only Cha Ji-hye and I were left.

I sighed and said to Cha Ji-hye.

“I wish I could be like her and agonize and ponder over trivial things. For her, this is all very serious I’m sure, but it is all

evidence she has a peaceful life.”

At the very least, it wasn't a matter of life and death, who to kill or not to kill.

Then Cha Ji-hye said.

“I envy it.”

“Right? I envy that idiot too.”

“I envy you.”

“..... me?”

“To think things over together and cry and laugh together, I envy that. That is what it must feel like to have a family. It has been too long since I have forgotten that feeling.”

“Ah.”

Then I remembered again that she had lost her parents at a young age and was alone.

When she says Marie and Hyun-ji are cute, she must be talking about that feeling.

“I really wish you happiness, Miss Ji-hye.”

Was that too random.

But I said it as honestly as a love confession.

Cha Ji-hye looked at me, then smiled.

‘Ah!’

I got surprised.

I think this was the first time Cha Ji-hye had smiled and shown it openly.

“Thankfully, while I live my life, there are two things I have found that will bring me happiness.”

“What are they?”

“One of them you’ll find out tomorrow or the day after or so.”

“And the other?”

“That is.”

Cha Ji-hye extended her hand towards me.

She caressed my cheek and said.

“Right now, you’ll find out when we return home.”

My heart was shaking.

This woman too knows how to make a man’s heart shake.

After that day, our relationship changed for sure.

First, she took her things that were in the guest room and moved them into my bedroom. We fell asleep together and woke up in the morning together.

Her behavior and speech towards me didn’t change but at the least, no matter when I held her or kissed her, she took it all.

And I was able to read her emotions hidden under her expressionless face a little more.

She wasn’t a woman like Min-jeong with lots of aegyo or displays of affection, but I was happy with it. I could feel what happiness was while being with her.

And then I figured out what the other thing that brought her happiness in life was One day Cha Ji-hye said she had business to take care of left the house and she came back riding a white Lamborghini.

“I ordered it a few weeks ago but it took longer than expected.”

At the exotic splendor of the Lamborghini, my jaw couldn’t help but drop to the floor.

She bought this by selling the wyvern majeong I had gifted her.

\*\*\*

A large and fancy mansion.

From the entrance of the mansion surrounded by steel bars to the expansive front lawn, it was bustling with security guards in black suits.

The front of the residence.

Lee Chang-wee got out of his car and snickered as he looked at the forbidding residence scene before him.

‘He’s set up a bunch of scarecrows.’

Was he trying to look dangerous by placing all these useless security guards everywhere?

This was what Lee Chang-wee was thinking when he made a fierce cynical smile.

“Open it.”

Lee Chang-wee called out coldly.

The security guards recognized him and opened the gates.

Lee Chang-wee entered confidently and was once again stopped by the security guards at the gate entrance.

“We will have to pat you down first.”

“That’s bothersome.”

“I apologize. But we have to inspect.....”

“Get lost.”

“Excuse me?”

Puuk! Puk!

As if shooing away a fly, Lee Chang-wee flicked his wrist twice. Two security guards, in one second, flew to either side.

“.....!”

“Wh, what?!”

The surprised security guards instinctively reached inside their jackets and pulled out their guns.

“Kuk kuk.”

Lee Chang-wee chuckled.

Paat!

A blue aura flared up and wrapped around his body.

The security guards couldn't bring themselves to pull the triggers and hesitated.

The opponent was Lee Chang-wee. An important figure who had entered this residence numerous times in the past.

“Move aside. If you get in the way, I'll kill you all.”

Like that, Lee Chang-wee went onwards.

At front door, he shoved aside the security guard that tried to stop him and without knocking, opened the door.

“Lee Chang-wee? Why are you causing such a ruckus?”

A fat old man with a white beard was sitting in a rocking chair with a frown.

It was the old man that had thrown an alcohol bottle at Lee Chang-wee in the past.

“It's not like this is the first or second time I've come to see you, the process to enter was too bothersome.”

“.....”

The old man felt an uneasy atmosphere at Lee Chang-wee's impertinent demeanor. Because of that, instead of getting angry, he dealt with him calmly.

“I see. I guess you're right.”

“Thank you for understanding.”

“How did Heising's work go? Why have I not heard anything



from Heising?”

“Heising is dead.”

“Wh, what?”

The old man raised his large frame out of his rocking chair at once.

“He failed his mission and he died in the middle of it.”

“Then...how bad is the damage to the pirate fleet.....”

“The members of the pirate group returning to the pirate islands all died as well.”

“.....?!”

The old man’s face became white as a sheet as he teetered back into his seat.

Lee Chang-wee’s words continued.

“Upon their return, it seemed they must have met an unidentified assailant. Unfortunately.”

Lee Chang-wee was smiling like the devil.

“Uhh...!”

The old man’s face was stricken with terror.

# Chapter 141 – Ranker (Part 2)

---

The total amount of karma.

That is the number when all my skills and items were quantified as karma.

According to Odin's advice, I decided to enroll in the world examinee rankings. I calculated all my skills and items into karma.

Not just the grades I received after clearing the missions but the karma I received from what I bought with money was significant as well.

I had also raised my skill levels through training rather than using karma before too.

Seeing all the karma added up,

“Woah.....”

A number so big that my jaw almost fell out.

First, the skills and items I had are as follows.

- Main skill: spirit summons (superior level 1).

- Assist skill: physical strength buff (intermediate level 5), guider (entry level 1), teleportation (intermediate level 1), vision buffer (entry level 1).

- Special skill: skill synthesis

- Synthesis skill: Divine protection of the Wind (master), Divine Protection of Fire (master), reflex (master), flame of life (intermediate level 4), transmission (entry level 1), virtual space (intermediate level 1), shooting (entry level 1), bullet revision (master), reload, dynamic visual acuity (master), see-through (entry level 1), foresight.

- Remaining karma: +16,000

- Item: AW50F, Neilson H2 (x2), item backpack

Calculating all these as karma, how much will it be?

I started writing in a notebook and began to calculate.

But then, laying across from me on the bed, Cha Ji-hye looked at me and said.

“Can’t you just ask your board?”

“.....”

I suddenly looked an idiot.

Cha Ji-hye smiled at me with her eyes before closing them and going to sleep.

After being together for a little while, I could now detect the nuances of her facial expressions.

“Will you show me the total karma with all my skills and items?”

As I said it, the word on the board really started to wiggle and change. What a very impressive AI.

-Showing examinee Kim Hyun-ho’s aggregate karma total with skills and items. This sum includes the remaining karma.

-Total karma: +108,600

“Woah.....”

Seeing this huge amount, my jaw dropped.

“How much did you get?”

Asked Cha Ji-hye.

She was pretending to sleep but must’ve been curious. She’s oddly cute.

“108,600 karma.”

“What?”

Asked Cha Ji-hye, doubting her ears.

“108,600 karma.”

“And you just now finished your 8<sup>th</sup> exam?”

“Yes.”

Of course, this wasn't the sum solely from having cleared exams.

There were instances where I raised my skills through training, and a ridiculous amount of karma I bought with an astronomical amount of money as well.

I sent this number to Odin in a text.

Then I climbed into bed and fell asleep next to Cha Ji-hye.

I didn't know it, but the ripple effect that my text message would create would change the world.

\*\*\*

[108,600]

“Oy.....!”

Odin saw his text message and, without realizing it himself, groaned.

He was now just an 8<sup>th</sup> turn examinee.

He's merely completed 8 exams, is this even possible?

‘He said he killed a lot of corrupt examinees while fighting the pirates. He's made rapid progress from fighting with the Chinese examinee group.’

Odin got the feeling this examinee will be an explosive nuclear bomb.

He defeated Heising, someone with a strong evil reputation from the Chinese examinee group. Heising was now just considered a stepping stone for Hyun-ho, who rose after defeating him!

A strong person like him was rising up and making an honest race towards clearing the missions.

How would the Arena business world take that?

The investors waiting for the right moment to expose majeong technology to the world. How would they take the appearance of Kim Hyun-ho?

Even for Odin himself, he was faced with a lot of pressure and had to appease the massive businesses.

He only fought with the determination to not leave his daughter Bella alone, that's what he focused on.

Thanks to that, he had been clearing the missions up to this point and was still standing today.

But even for Odin, who had such a clear goal, if he didn't have the protection of the Nordic exam group he might not have made it.

They aren't obvious like the Chinese examinee group but nearly all of the country agencies saw Arena as a big business opportunity.

Rather than emancipating the examinees by having them reach the final destination, they wanted a method of continuous majeong collection.

Of course, up until now, they had accounted for the examinees' opposition already.

But the existence of Kim Hyun-ho might create a change in the status quo.

He's already collided with the pirates and they know he's already had conflicts with the dark magicians as well.

On top of that, he was heading for the end of the exams at a fast pace.

'If he registers in the world rankings, he'll start getting a lot of attention but.....'

Odin smiled.

'There will be that many more examinees who will want to join

the fight to clear the exams.'

\*\*\*

That day, there was a change in the World Arena Association's rankings.

The Arena government agencies around the world were thrown into a shock.

The shock to the Korean research agency especially was very large.

-Examinee Kim Hyun-ho

-Nationality: South Korea

-Ranking: 7<sup>th</sup>

-Total karma: 108,600

"Uh, what is this?"

The Korean Arena Research Agency.

Chief Kim Joong-tae was staring at his monitor with eyes wide open.

'Why is Kim Hyun-ho's name on here?!'

This isn't possible.

He would be a 7<sup>th</sup>, maybe 8<sup>th</sup> turn examinee or so now.

No. The fact that he hasn't been handed over to the Chinese examinee group was more suspicious.

What kind of miracle did he receive to be able to evade death by the Chinese and then also manage to become an incredible ranker?!

7<sup>th</sup> place!

'Why did this bastard suddenly appear with that ranking?'

Chief Kim Joong-tae's could feel a chill in his liver and

gallbladder.

Among the Korean examinees, there was actually no one in the top 20 of the rankings.

But suddenly, a Korean examinee appeared! Ranked 7<sup>th</sup> no less!

On top of that, someone not aligned with the Korean Arena Research Agency!

‘This is dangerous!’

Chief Kim Joong-tae felt on edge.

The current government, and even the president, didn’t have a clue about Arena.

There was no figure that really knew about this or had political authority which was why Chief Kim Joong-tae was able to exercise so much power.

But even if that was the case, if a ranker this big appeared, it may make its way into the president’s ear.

‘This is a big problem.....’

With his heart pounding in his chest, Chief Kim Joong-tae took out his outdated flip phone.

The person Chief Kim Joong-tae called was Lee Chang-wee in Beijing.

-What is it?

“What happened?”

-What are you talking about?

“Kim Hyun-ho! What the fuck happened with Kim Hyun-ho?”

-Ahh, so you saw that too?

“Why is it that I gave you plenty of information and you haven’t done anything with Kim Hyun-ho yet?”

-Can’t you tell by seeing the rankings? He managed to overcome

the danger and became stronger. He's a very impressive person.

"You listen to me!"

-What's the matter, Chief Kim Joong-tae?

"Have you given up on Kim Hyun-ho?"

-For me, there is no longer any need to deal with Kim Hyun-ho.

Chief Kim Joong-tae could feel a weird atmosphere.

This man, he said 'for me.'

As if his thoughts represented the thoughts of the Chinese examinee group.

Chief Kim Joong-tae didn't know that Lee Chang-wee's rival Heising was dead.

And of course he also didn't know about the events that happened within the Chinese examinee group either.

"What does that mean? That you don't need to oppose Kim Hyun-ho....."

-Well, I've nothing more to say. Don't call me anymore.

"Hey, hold on.....!"

Lee Chang-wee hung up on him.

'What's happened in China?!'

Chief Kim Joong-tae was regretting having been negligent about any news from the Chinese side.

It was late but he had to get some news and figure out what to do in this situation.

But unfortunately for Chief Kim Joong-tae, he wasn't given the time to do that.

Ring!

The phone in his office rang.



Chief Kim Joong-tae answered up the phone.

“What?”

-Chief, it's the Blue House.\*

(TN: Korea's version of the White House).

“Put him through.”

Then he heard an old man's voice.

-Chief Kim.

“Yes, presidential secretary, sir. Have you been well?”

-Is there anything you've heard from the Chinese examinee group?

“Before you mention it, I felt that something was off about them and was about to find out.”

-I think there was a big power shift within the Chinese examinee group, you don't know exactly what that is yet?

“Yes, they are rather secretive over there. It has been difficult finding out.”

-Hm, well that's that. Anyway, do you know about an examinee Kim Hyun-ho?

Chief Kim Joong-tae's heart began to beat harder, thud thud thud thud.

“Regrettably he isn't within our agency so I don't know much. From what I know, he's an examinee with Jinseong Group.”

-He is the first in our country to be in the world rankings. Hearing he isn't one of ours, is regrettable. You know nothing more?

“Yes, I'll find out more and, if possible, will bring him to our agency.”

-I see. So you are saying you don't know anything else him.

“Yes.....”

-Haha, well.

“.....?”

His words had an icy edge.

Chief Kim Joong-tae left like his blood was running cold.

-I’ve talked with Chairman Park Jinseong. You, Chief Kim, not only are you incompetent, but you think we’re idiots?

Chairman Park Jinseong of Jinseong group!

He was a person whose life was rescued by Kim Hyun-ho.

Chief Kim Joong-tae realized his plans have gone terribly awry.

“Pre-presidential secretary, sir.....”

-Enough. I don’t want to mince words with you any longer.

He hung up.

And 15 minutes later, a group of people from the National Intelligence Service stormed the Korean arena Research Agency.

\*\*\*

-Have you been well?

A voice I hadn’t heard in a long while, Chairman Park Jinseong. His voice sounded very cheerful.

“Yes, so-so as you know. How is your health, chairman?”

-Healthy, of course. For this life that was renewed with much difficulty I even quit drinking. Although a life without alcohol, I’m not sure whether this is living or not.

“Haha, I’m glad. May you live long until you smear poop on the walls.

(TN: A Korean phrase to mean until you go senile.) -Oh shush. Anyway, I hear you’re doing very well lately?

“How so?”

-You son of a bitch. I mean the ranking!

“Ah, through the Nordic Examinee Group, I did register in the rankings. What ranking am I?”

-..... you're asking me because you don't know?

“I haven't heard from Mr. Odin yet.”

-My, you live as a hopeless innocent. Someone like you is 7<sup>th</sup>, my goodness.....

“Excuse me? 7<sup>th</sup>?”

-That's right!

“I'm very high.”

I was completely surprised.

7<sup>th</sup>?

I did anticipate I'd be ranked high but I had no idea I'd be 7<sup>th</sup> out of all the examinees in the world!

Of course there could be lots of strong players like Lee Chang-wee who aren't in the rankings but still, it was undoubtedly a high ranking.

-You know you're still in my group, right?

“I do.”

While treating Chairman Park Jinseong, I became contracted into Jinseong group. How could I forget that?

Thanks to that I got lots of help here and there from Secretary Lee Jung-shik.

-But why aren't you bringing back any majeong? A man like you in 7<sup>th</sup> place, how have you never once brought us any majeong?

“Ah.....”

Now that I think of it, yeah.

Majeong was an examinee's strongest money maker.

But thanks to making a fortune from my flame of life I had no interest in gathering majeong.

-We've got the 7<sup>th</sup> rank player in our group, show us the merit of that, you bastard.

"Hahaha, if the opportunity arises, I'll bring you some majeong."

-Tsk tsk, anyway, there will be some good news soon.

"Good news?"

# Chapter 142 – Proposal (Part 1)

---

-I spoke with the Blue House.

“The Blue House?”

I was flustered.

‘Oh right, this is Chairman Park Jinseong.’

I regarded him like a neighborhood ajusshi and I momentarily forgot who I was dealing with. This old man is the richest person in South Korea.

-They’re going to fire Chief Kim Joong-tae.

“Really?”

Chief Kim Joong-tae.

He sold my information to the Chinese and even played a hand in Cha Ji-hye’s death, that rotten bastard.

A bastard like that getting fired, it was very welcome news. I was finally hearing the good news that our country was doing the right thing for the first time.

-Up till now, our friendship with the Chinese examinee group was important so Chief Kim Joong-tae was kept. The Blue House had determined that China would reign supreme in the Arena business. But now, the situation has changed.

When I heard those words, I could see where this is going.

“Lee Chang-wee has taken control of the Chinese Examinee Group, hasn’t he.”

-So you know?

“The guy had asked me before for a deal to work together.”

-You...if something like that happened, you should’ve told us that!

Chairman Park Jinseong shout angrily.

“You’re all healed, I thought you had no more interest in Arena.”

-Having no interest in a possible future business, does that make sense?

“What do you mean, future business? I’m going to clear all the missions and finish this once and for all.

-Even if it happens as you say, how much majeong do you think the entire world has accrued? The quantity of how many years?

“Rather large isn’t it?”

-A ton, my boy. Even if a situation happens and it becomes impossible for additional majeong to be collected, the price of majeong will stay, no, will increase to more than it is now.

That’s true.

The allure of majeong which makes what is impossible with our current science skills, possible.

If not that, there is no need to leave other energy sources and be so invested in majeong.

-Whether it is used in developing strategic weapons or space technology, majeong will undoubtedly be used for important things. Even if it becomes impossible to collect more majeong, the majeong collected up to this point is being used for those things already.

That is why Jinseong Group was also scouting examinees and collecting majeong.

I didn’t have a clear idea of what their plans were but I’m sure they’re also researching uses for majeong.

-More importantly, you’re the one that killed Heising?

“You heard that too?”

-I have people planted on the Chinese side too you know.

How Chairman Park Jinseong said it was as if he was saying not to underestimate him.

-Anyway, thanks to you, Heising's faction that didn't cooperate well with Lee Chang-wee was annihilated and now the size of the Chinese examinee group has been halved.

"Annihilated?"

I felt strange.

I was the one that killed Heising.

And it's true that while fighting the pirates, I killed a lot of corrupt examinees.

But it wasn't enough to obliterate the whole faction behind Heising.

-As soon as he found out Heising had died, Lee Chang-wee murdered Heising's entire faction.

".....!"

It sent chills down my spine.

To have taken such drastic action as soon as Heising died.

Lee Chang-wee's ruthlessness and boldness far surpassed what I expected of him.

-Just like that, the Chinese Examinee group has been halved and the Chinese communist party is no longer able to control Lee Chang-wee. Rather, they fear being murdered by Lee Chang-wee and are weary of him.

That was a completely warranted fear just based on his action of killing Heising's entire faction.

He probably took that into account and that might be why he took such drastic action.

-Anyway, the Chinese examinee group has kind of floundered so in regards to the Arena business, there is no longer any need for us

to stand behind the Chinese.

“So we’ve come to the conclusion that the Chinese Arena business no longer reigns supreme then.”

-That’s right. Anyway, after the situation turned that way I thought this was the right time too and I made a call to the Blue House. I had a frank conversation with the president and, because of that, you came up.

He was talking to the president and mentioned me!

I was very grateful for Chairman Park Jinseong’s thoughtfulness and kindness towards me.

“Thank you.”

-I also threw in talk about that woman, Cha Ji-hye as well. Her identity will soon be restored.

“Wow, thank you!”

-You’re happier about that than the thing before. You care for her?

“.....”

This old man, has a keen sense.

To be honest, the likes of Chief Kim Joong-tae, I couldn’t care less about him.

Because I’ve gotten so strong I no longer need to fear anyone.

More than that, the news about Cha Ji-hye, I rejoiced as if it was my news.

-It is too early in the stages to guarantee anything right now, but in Arena related business, there will be an important decision made between our group and the government.

“Really?”

-Once that is confirmed someone from the government will come to you, just a heads up.



“Yes.”

Like that the call was finished.

I ran over to Cha Ji-hye and relayed to her this news.

“I see.”

Cha Ji-hye had been prepping a meal in the kitchen and, as expected, she had a placid expression.

“Aren’t you happy? Your identity that you lost after being murdered, it’s going to be returned to you.”

“It doesn’t really matter.”

“When you were murdered, the money and assets or friends you lost...”

“I did have a home but now...I don’t really feel any attachment to it.”

“Then what about Chief Kim Joong-tae? That bastard is getting fired, doesn’t that make you happy?”

Cha Ji-hye just stared at me.

“Do you want me to be happy?”

“Of course I do.”

“I am happy.”

She looked like she was slightly smiling but she returned to her serene expression and moved the finished dwenjang to the table.

“.....”

I wanted to make her happy but it actually made me happy. No matter how I look at her, she was a peculiar woman.

That evening, I got a phone call from someone unexpected.

-You been well?

“..... Lee Chang-wee.”

-Thanks for last time.

“It wasn’t my intention.”

-Hahaha. I hadn’t expected that much either but you are impressive. Worthy of a 7<sup>th</sup> ranker.

“.....”

How annoying.

Heising’s faction was obliterated and the Chinese examinee’s group was halved but Lee Chang-wee emerged as a strong leader.

From a long term standpoint, I don’t see this is good news.

More than the Chinese examinee group being moved according to the communist party officials, having the Chinese examinee group controlled by Lee Chang-wee, who was part of the Arena, was far scarier.

-Anyway, thanks everything, you’ve seen enough fun to get you to 7<sup>th</sup> place, let’s call it mutual aid.

“I hate to hear that that word coming from you.”

-Haha, no need to be so rough. Personally, I’m very satisfied with you.

“.....”

-The Chinese examinee group will no longer be coming after you. Of course, live life and things can always change, no way to tell how though.

“I hope we never have to meet again.”

-I feel the same. Then be well, savior.

I roughly pressed the end call button.

‘Saying that bullshit, what savior.’

There was a lot I gained from defeating Heising but this thing with Lee Chang-wee, I felt uncomfortable with it.

“Was that Lee Chang-wee?”

Asked Cha Ji-hye.

“Yes.”

“I hope you don’t have any more interactions with Lee Chang-wee anymore.”

“I agree.”

“No, it’s not because of that, he’s really dangerous.”

I had an odd feeling and looked at Cha Ji-hye.

“Have you forgotten? Lee Chang-wee murdered all of Heising’s examinees.”

“Yes, he really is dangerous.....”

In an instant I felt a shock like a thunderbolt hit me inside my head.

They would have been mostly corrupt examinees.

If he killed them all.....!

“Even after offsetting his own minus karma, don’t you think he would have earned an enormous amount of karma?”

“With all the karma he earned, he would’ve raised his skill levels.”

“He would have.”

That means he was much stronger than before.

Even before this, he was a scary person, but he would be even stronger now.

“I really hope I never run into him.”

\*\*\*

It had been three days since I received the call from Chairman Park Jinseong.

-Mr. Kim Hyun-ho?

The head of Jinseong group's 3<sup>rd</sup> secretarial office.

"What is it?"

-Excuse me but do you have time today?

"What is it?"

-An interested party from The Blue House wishes to meet. The Chairman will be present as well.

"When?"

-They said it would be best if in the morning, would you have time?

"Yes, doesn't matter."

I was a little curious, hearing it's an interested party from The Blue House. Who will it be? Someone I've seen in the news?

-Then I will be there in an hour to pick you up.

"No, just tell me the address and I can go on my own."

-It is the ranch you used to frequent.

"There again?"

-It has to be a quiet meeting which is why it's that location again.

"Got it."

I hung up the phone and I told this all to Cha Ji-hye.

"It'll probably be the chief secretary. The one from the Blue House taking care of Arena matters is Chief Secretary Kim Byung-ho."

"Really?"

It had been so long since I watched the news or read the paper so maybe that's why it was a name I was hearing for the first time. Still, if he's the Chief Secretary of The Blue House, I'm sure he has

a very high position indeed.

“I wanted to go for a drive anyway, it’s good. Let’s take my Lamborghini.”

“Happy to.”

We finished our simple outing preparations and departed.

We rode in Cha Ji-hye’s white Lamborghini and cars made way for us on the road and the miracle of them never cutting us off was amazing to witness.

People walking the sidewalks looked at us differently too.

The car is just so exotic.

‘Should I get another car too?’

Seeing Cha Ji-hye’s car, somehow I felt like my Porsche cayenne was shabby.

The Lamborghini zoomed through and we arrived at the ranch in no time.

“Have you arrived?”

Secretary Lee Jung-shik was waiting for us.

“And the Chairman and Chief Secretary Kim Byung-ho?”

“The two have already gone out hunting. I will put in a call to the Chairman.”

“No, it’s alright.”

I had the guider skill so it wasn’t hard to find Chairman Park Jinseong.

He might be healthy from the flame of life but how far could an old man have gone.

We quickly discovered the two old men resting atop a boulder.

With an imposing presence and looking quite healthy was old man Chairman Park Jinseong.

Handsomely tall with a thin frame, this must be old man, Chief Secretary Kim Byung-ho.

“Oh, you’ve arrived.”

Park Jinseong Chairman greeted me.

“It has been a long time.”

We exchanged greetings and then I looked at Chief Secretary Kim Byung-ho.

“So you are Mr. Kim hyun-ho. Huhu, you are much younger that I thought.”

“Yes, nice to meet you.”

Following, Chief Secretary Kim Byung-ho exchanged greetings with Cha Ji-hye.

“Ah, so you are that Cha Ji-hye?”

“I am.”

“I heard your story. I apologize on behalf of the country.”

Chief Secretary Kim Byung-ho bowed his head towards Cha Ji-hye, expressing his apology.

“It is alright.”

Cha Ji-hye coolly accepted the apology. Just how chill is this woman!

“Now now, let’s try to catch a one of anything.”

Pressed Chairman Park Jinseong.

Now that I looked around, the two old men had come out with a hunting dog. The hunting dog kept his nose at the ground sniffing.

“Sylph.”

-Meow!

As soon as I spoke, Sylph appeared.

Chief Secretary Kim Byung-ho looked completely surprised.

“Find something to hunt.”

-Meow!

Sylph flew off like a loosed arrow. I smiled and said.

“Let’s hurry and then get down to business.”

Within 30 minutes, Sylph found a moose. The moose died at the shotgun fired by Chief Secretary Kim Byung-ho.

We finished hunting early and returned to the ranch and so we could talk.

“First of all, Chief Kim Joong-tae who has caused you both trouble has been removed from the office. An investigation into his corruption will begin soon.”

“Yes, I heard that.”

“And our government, in order to strengthen our competitiveness regarding Arena, have decided to merge with the Jinseong Group.”

At those words, Chairman Park Jinseong opened his mouth.

“So to summarize, our Arena business and the Korean Arena Research Agency will be consolidated into a single entity.”

An Arena business run by the Korean Arena Research Agency and Jinseong Group?

While I was still surprised at this reveal, Chief Secretary Kim Byung-ho said to me.

“I will tell you point-blank. For a newly formed organization to become a strong competitor, we need a world ranker like you, Kim Hyun-ho.”

## Chapter 143 – Proposal (Part 2)

---

I had heard what Chairman Park Jinseong and Chief Secretary Kim Byung-ho had said and I was carefully organizing my thoughts.

World governments and businesses had entered the Arena business.

The most advanced group in creating technology that used majeong was in America, the Maglun family.

The business belonged to that Smith Maglun that I had cured before. The world's 1st ranked Dana Litalin was also on the Maglun's' side.

In terms of majeong collection and quantity, the Chinese examinees were number one.

Befitting a large nation of 1.3 billion people, they had the most examinees. Considering that they are also pirates, I'm sure they collect majeong all sorts of other ways as well.

Due to the annihilation of Heising's faction, the numbers have been halved but I don't think their members will be easily swayed by this.

Other than that, there was Odin's Nordic examinee group and Indonesia, Russia, Japan, many countries holding top ranking examinees.

This world Arena business full of strong players and the Korean Arena Research Agency's position isn't that high.

Now that Korea was now joining together with Jinseong Group's Arena business and was planning on having an exponential growth spurt in competitiveness.

‘And to do so they need me, who is ranked 7th?’

I think they wanted me to be their poster boy.



But I was already contracted with Jinseong Group.

I was already contracted to sell the majeong I collect to the Jinseong Group. If the Jinseong Group merges with the Korean Arena Research Agency, naturally my affiliation will be grandfather in with Korean Arena Research Agency.

I felt that was a bit strange and asked.

“More straightforwardly, what it is you want?”

“There are many things.”

Said Chief Secretary Kim Byung-ho.

“Currently, it is my understanding you have not collected any majeong.”

“Yes.”

I was focusing on clearing the missions and hadn't paid much attention to majeong collection. And I had no reason to be fired up about getting any majeong either.

“We want for you, Mr. Kim Hyun-ho, to collect a far higher class of majeong than before for us.”

“.....”

“And in the instance of examinee Odin, whom you know well, he reigns as a powerful feudal lord in the Arena world. Just like him, we would like you to also gain a high and firm position so that other Korean examinees' actions can become easier.”

I sighed.

“Then I cannot work with the same goals in mind as you two.”

“Why is that?”

“I am not a businessman. The reason I fight in Arena is to survive.”

“.....”

“I think you two want a firm groundwork for a continuous business, but I will make it so no one else has to go to the Arena ever again.”

I gave a final word of advice to the two people who were at a loss for words.

“I’ll speak plainly as well. I will clear these missions until I reach the end. Will you support me in that wholeheartedly?”

“.....”

“Our goals are in opposite directions, but if cover our eyes and play nice and get in the same boat? How much sincerity would there be in that? And how long do you think that would last?”

An awkward silence fell upon us.

Chairman Park Jinseong finally broke the silence.

“From what I understand that is kind of the assumption. If you clear all the missions, the other examinees too will be freed from the missions, there is no way to know that for sure. Isn’t that true?”

“That is true but putting together everything we know so far, we can analyze that everyone’s missions are heading towards one thing. That is why there are corrupt examinees absorbed in making money and have given up on the missions.”

“Regardless, until all the missions are cleared, can you not work with us?”

“And afterwards?”

“We go our separate ways.”

“What I worry about is one thing. The government and Jinseong group have invested a lot in the majeong business. But because of me we will arrive at a point where majeong can never be collected again.”

I shrugged my shoulders and asked them.

“Are you going to leave me alone? When there has already been someone who sold me out for a couple bucks to the Chinese?”

“There will be no cause for our government to harm you.”

“And I’m saying I cannot believe that.”

I sighed.

“In the end neither one of you is saying that you will wholeheartedly support me in clearing the missions to the end. So, you don’t want that?”

“.....”

“.....”

Chief Secretary Kim Byung-ho for sure and Chairman Park Jinseong too, in the end, were investors.

To these people, more than the safety of the examinees, their investment was more important.

I got up from my seat.

“The more we talk, the more it’ll just cement the point that we are in different positions. I’ll be on my way.”

Cha Ji-hye followed me and headed out too.

We got in the car together and returned home.

“I don’t quite understand it.”

Said Cha Ji-hye suddenly as we were driving.

“What about?”

“How you have such a sense of duty to clearing the exams.”

“.....”

“You are strong now Kim Hyun-ho. If you don’t become absorbed in clearing the missions, I don’t see any real danger in the Arena for you now.”

Her words were right.

Rather it was more dangerous for me to try to clear all the missions.

The last 8th turn was like that.

The pirate attack and whatnot, if I had just ignored it all and left the Deport harbor, I was sure there would have been nothing dangerous for me.

I was actually volunteering my life to fight basically.

“Not clearing the missions and keeping the examinee identity and maintaining your skills, you can earn higher profits, receive superior treatment, and live life that way. You have the flame of life so, unlike the Chinese examinees collecting majeong, you won’t have to do dirty work like that either.”

“I suppose.”

“So why is it you are so adamant about clearing the exams?”

“.....”

I had never thought about it that deeply so I couldn’t really give her an answer.

I never really had any sense of duty. I wasn’t some hero with some flaming sense of justice or anything.

But.....

“I think I just don’t like it.”

“You mean Arena?”

“Yes, maybe it’s because I saw my teammates die. Because compared to examinees like us that have survived, I’m sure there are many more that have died.”

“Probably so. When I was with the Korean Arena Research Agency, I saw more dead examinees than ones that made it through.”

“And the exams are something created by the gods or a divine

entity or law and angels.”

“.....”

“Divine entity would be like a god or Truth, an absolute being. I think there is definitely a reason for the exams.”

“I see.”

“All the exams so far, they’ve had answers. That’s why I believe in what I do. No matter how man tries to take advantage of the exams, beyond that there must be an ultimate reason.”

Corrupt examinees had been created and various countries from our world were preparing businesses that relied on using the exams.

If you were to argue, it could be right to say that all this too was an arrangement of divine interventions.

For sure, more than what we could comprehend, I figured there was something bigger what we could see on the surface.

That’s why I did the exams.

I was going to keep clearing them and get to that answer once and for all.

\*\*\*

It was when we had arrived back in Bucheon and were back in the parking lot.

We had parked the car and got out when two men approached us.

With black curly hair and dark tan skin, they look like they were from SE Asia.

“Divine Protection of the Wind.”

When these unfamiliar guys suddenly came towards us as if they had been waiting for us to arrive, I went ahead and used the Divine Protection of the Wind.

Cha Ji-hye drew up her aura too but thankfully the two

foreigners don't look like they were here to fight.

“Hello.”

“We are not enemies, there is no need to fight.”

The two men spoke using the Arena's language.

But upon finding out that the two of them were examinees, I became even more wary.

Amongst the two, the tall and handsome man extended his right hand.

“Arena in India, I am Krishna.”

Arena in India?

In a low voice, Cha Ji-hye gave me a hint.

“The Arena organization in India.”

India?

While I was still suspicious, I calmly shook hands with the good-looking Krishna from India.

After that, the short and stocky Indonesian man extended his hand.

“We have come from the India exam group. Call me Rabra.”

India exam group? What is this?

While shaking hands I still felt weird about this so I had to ask.

“What is Arena in India and also what is the India exam group?”

“Our Arena in India is the formal Republic of India government organization that oversees examinees.”

“Our India exam group is a pure organization of examinees who have joined forces with the sole mission of clearing exams and surviving.”

Seeing them explain their positions so competitively, it seemed they weren't on good terms with each other.

From what I've heard though, Arena in India sounds like a group for the profit in majeong business, and the India exam group is like the Nordic exam group and a collective for targeting exams.

Naturally, I was leaning more towards the India exam group.

Cha Ji-hye spoke.

"We are Hindu and Muslim."

"Ah....."

Only then did I understand the situation. I couldn't distinguish which was one was right and wrong.

At Cha Ji-hye's jab, the two men looked embarrassed.

"And why is it that you have come to us?"

"We have come to recruit you, Mr. Kim Hyun-ho."

"We wish to share in your goal."

Krishna and Rabra said at the same time.

They glanced at each other and the two men don't forget to be wary of the other.

'Now that I think of it, this kind of thing will become more and more common.'

My name and ranking had been publicized, so going forward there would be many recruitment offers like this.

First off, I communicated my refusal and sent them back. They said regardless of faith they reiterated they would treat me considerately.

They even offered a lofty 100 billion won but I wasn't really interested in money.

I had thought the two people had left but Krishna came back.

"If so, then I will say something else."

"I know someone in need of treatment."

“Is that so.”

I immediately knew what he wanted. He originally wanted to meet me for two reasons. So I let him know.

“In American dollars, it’ll be 200 million. Treatment time will be 2 weeks, the location will be in Korea.”

Last time when I treated Chairman Maglun, I gave him my fee upfront as well.

“I can’t guarantee the treatment will only take 2 weeks, but the cost is too high and this person’s health is quite poor.”

“My rest period is very limited. I do not wish to spend two long weeks in a foreign country.”

“India is a good place. For the two weeks you visit we will treat you very kindly.”

“I am sorry. No matter what, I cannot compromise. Please relay that those are my terms or I must refuse.”

Krishna sighed.

“How do you wish to be paid?”

“Before treatment is complete, I wish to be paid into my Swiss account.”

Then I suddenly remembered, and I added.

“If you would rather pay in karma, I will take just 5,000 karma.”

“5,000 karma? I think that will work. Very well, we will pay with karma then.”

“It’s been difficult lately to buy karma, you think that will be possible?”

“There are always plenty of examinees who wish to leave lots of money for their family. And India has as many examinees as China. Actually, now we have more than the Chinese examinees.”

Right.



In terms of population, India was comparable to China.

“Anyway, I will go and relay the news.”

“Okay.”

Then Krishna left.

I currently had 16,000 karma left.

If, through this deal, I got 5,000 karma I could either raise my spirit summons or master another skill.

‘First, I have to think about how to use my karma prize.’

# Chapter 144 – Virtual Space Mastery (Part 1)

---

Cha Ji-hye raised her aura master to intermediate level 5 and she said she raised her physical strength buff to superior level 1.

“You have the synthetic muscle suit, why did you raise your physical strength buff?”

“The instantaneous reflex isn’t something that can be made up with the synthetic muscle suit.”

“Really? Anyway, now you aren’t far from the aura mastery.”

“Speaking just in terms of level numbers that’s true but the further up you go, the more karma it takes.”

“Anyway, I have a problem. I don’t know what to do with my remaining karma.”

“Show me your skill inventory.”

The skills I’ve got so far were as follows.

-Main skill: spirit summons (superior level 1) -Assist skill: physical strength buff (intermediate level 5), guider (entry level 1), teleportation (intermediate level 1), vision buffer (entry level 1).

-Special skill: skill synthesis

-Synthesis skill: Divine protection of the Wind (master), Divine Protection of Fire (master), reflex (master), flame of life (intermediate level 4), transmission (entry level 1), virtual space (intermediate level 1), shooting (entry level 1), bullet revision (master), reload, dynamic visual acuity (master), see-through (entry level 1), foresight.

-remaining karma: +16,000

Carefully looking at my skills list, Cha Ji-hye suddenly spoke.

“It is an easy choice to raise your spirit summons but among your

synthesis skills, do you have any inclination to master your transmission skill?

Transmission.

I created this skill a long time ago by synthesizing the physical strength buff and teleport.

-Transmission (synthesis skill): a flying object headed towards your body will pass through without causing damage.

\*Entry level 1: effect time 3 seconds, cool down 1 hour “I didn’t use it because it’s a dangerous skill.”

What would happen if the 3 seconds was up while something was passing through my body.

Then that something would stay in my body.

That was scary so I hadn’t used this at all.

“If you raised it to master, wouldn’t the effect time increase as well?”

“I suppose.”

I first summoned my board and asked.

“How much karma do I need to raise transmission to master?”

-Transmission (synthesis skill) showing karma needed for to raise to master.

-Transmission (synthesis skill): a flying object headed towards your body will pass through without causing damage.

\*Master: 200 seconds per day

-Uses 5,400 karma to raise to master.

“Without a cool down and it can be freely used for 200 seconds a day.”

“It’s a little over 3 minutes. I think with that much time, it is a powerful skill.”

I thought it over carefully.

I could neglect my enemy's attack for 200 seconds.

I could also attack unilaterally.

Let's add to that the effect of the foresight skill to that.

For 200 seconds, I could ignore my opponent's attacks, attack one-sidedly, all while also seeing how that person would move!

'That's totally unbeatable?'

There were, of course, restrictions.

The object the transmission skill refers to is a 'small object.'

If the object isn't small, like a sword or a punch, the transmission skill would be voided.

Anyway, it only costs 5,400 karma to master, seemed worth it.

'I have 16,000 karma anyway.'

And I might get another 5,000 karma from Arena in India too.

Eventually I invested 5,400 karma into mastering the transmission skill.

Mastering all the various skills I had gave me a sense of satisfaction.

Now I had 10,600 karma remaining.

If I invest it in spirit summons it would be enough to raise it to superior level 3.

But I suddenly had a thought.

"Should I master the virtual space?"

"It doesn't sound like a bad idea. Who knows, if you master it, it might give you some additional options."

"That's what I'm hoping for too."

When the virtual space was increased to intermediate level 1, it

became possible to store electronics.

Then the level after that, who knows what the options would be.

‘If storing weapons that use gunpowder becomes possible that would be killer.’

Thinking of that I spoke to my board.

“Show me what would happen if I invest my remaining karma into the virtual space skill.”

And then a long list of explanation on the virtual space appeared on the board.

-Virtual space (synthesis skill): create a virtual space and store objects. ‘Put,’ ‘retrieve” orders to store.

\*Intermediate level 1: 200 x 200 x 200 cm, possible to store electronics  
\*Intermediate level 2: 300 x 300 x 300 cm, possible to store electronics. (-500)  
\*Intermediate level 3: 400 x 400 x 400 cm, possible to store electronics (-600)  
\*Intermediate level 4: 500 x 500 x 500 cm possible to store electronics (-700)  
\*Intermediate level 5: 600 x 600 x 600 cm possible to store electronics (-800)  
Master: 1000 x 1000 x 1000 cm, possible to store electronics and living things. (-1500)  
-To master will cost 4,100 karma.

-Remaining karma: +10,600

“What?!”

I was so surprised I couldn’t help but shout.

“What is it?”

Cha Ji-hye, who was close by, was curious.

“Right after intermediate level 5 is master, it says it’s possible to store living organisms in there.”

“You mean living things?”

“Yes.”

“You can just store it just as is? The living being?”

“I suppose so.”

In the virtual space, time was stopped. I know because I’ve stored food and water in there before.

So, if I put in something living in the virtual space, it won’t starve to death or suffocate in there.

“But will this be of help in the exams?”

“At least from the perspective of the various country arena organizations, it’ll be groundbreaking.”

That part was true.

If a living thing from Arena that doesn’t exist in our world was brought back, how valuable of a research object would that be?

‘They might even consider bringing back a living monster to train it.’

If it’s perfectly safe, I don’t see that as entirely a bad idea.

In that way, if I can safely get majeong, there’s no way for them to use examinees.

Hmm, but the problem is if this will help with clearing the exams.

‘I have a lot of karma anyway, should I just do it?’

No matter what, increasing the space in the virtual space could only be considered a good thing.

At the end of my pondering I decided to master my virtual space.

-Raising virtual space (synthesis skill) to master with 4,100 karma.

-Remaining karma: +6,500

“Shall we test it out?”

“Then try storing me.”

I was completely surprised at Cha Ji-hye’s words.

“No, I can’t!”

“Why not?”

“I should test it out first with an animal!”

“I don’t really see a safety issue.”

“What kind of woman is so bold!”

We eventually decided to catch a pigeon and tested it out that way.

I used Sylph to bring back a pigeon and put it in the virtual space.

Pat!

The pigeon disappeared into the bag.

With an anxious heart, I waited and then retrieved the pigeon again.

Pu du duk!

As soon as I took out the pigeon it flapped its wings and left.

“There doesn’t seem to be a problem.”

“Even so.....”

“Try it.”

“Ugh.”

I hesitated.

“First, there’s another test.”

“What is it?”

“To see if storing is possible regardless of the person’s consent.”

“Ah!”

Agreed Cha Ji-hye.

What if, regardless of whether the person being stored consented to it or not, I could store someone by touching them?

I could freely store them in the virtual space and left them out right off a cliff.

“Try it.”

“Oh, okay.”

I grabbed Cha Ji-hye’s wrist and thought ‘place’.

But Cha Ji-hye remained unmoved at my side.

“Doesn’t work.”

“Then this time, I will consent to being put into the virtual space.”

I tried again to put her in the virtual space. Then.....

Pat!

And then she disappeared.

Surprised, I screamed again.

“Retrieve Cha Ji-hye!”

Paat!

Cha Ji-hye appeared again before my eyes.

With an odd look, she said.

“Does it really not work?”

“What?”

“I definitely was thinking that I want to go into the virtual space.”

“You don’t know? You were just in the bag.”

“Really?”

Cha Ji-hye’s eyes showed her surprised.

It seems that because time is stopped inside the virtual space she didn’t realize she had been placed inside.

Anyway there was no bad effect on Cha Ji-hye, who had gone and



come back from the virtual space.

“Later, let’s try another experiment. When I am sleeping, try to place me in the virtual space.”

“To see if it’s possible to store when you aren’t aware?”

“Yes.”

“I’ll try that later.”

But anyway, how will storing living things be of use?

Cha Ji-hye gave a suggestion.

“Among the assist skills, there is an animal training skill.”

“Animal training?”

“Yes, monsters are impossible to train, but there are examinees who train beasts and use them in fights.”

“Really?”

“Yes, the higher the level, the stronger the beast you can control. Of course, when you get to the higher levels of the exams, there are more cons than pros so nearly no one uses them.”

“What kind of cons?”

“First of all, it is a hassle to move where people are with a large beast and the feeding becomes a problem too. And to make the beast stronger you invest karma and it takes away opportunity for the examinee to get stronger.”

“Ah.....”

“But those considerable cons do not apply to you.”

The virtual space!

I could freely store my beast and move about and it won’t be a hassle.

The length and width of the virtual space I mastered was a whopping 10 meters!

An incredible virtual space!

I could skip a lot of meals since time in the virtual space was stopped.

On top of that, I've become a strong ranker, I have enough leeway to feely invest karma into a beast.

'Train some beast like a tiger and it'd be good to use it as my secret weapon.'

If a beast suddenly charged out and attacked, the unexpectedness would fluster the opponent and cause openings in their defense. In a dangerous situation, I could use it as a shield.

That night, we got into bed together when Cha Ji-hye suddenly must've thought of something and looked at me.

"Did you see the length and width is 10 meters?"

"Yes."

"Then you could store a car?"

"Huk!"

I let out a sound like a scream.

That's right!

Cars!

I could get a car and gas and if I can use them in the Arena.....!

"Ah, but I don't know if that'll work. Maybe if it was an electric car but it might not work with a car that runs on fossil fuel."

"That won't be a problem."

".....?"

"Many Arena related organizations will have developed cars that run on majeong."

"Ah....."

I see.

If it was a car that ran on majeong, it might work.

A majeong car like that would, by design, be ‘an electronic run on majeong’ so it might be possible to store in my virtual space.

“I’ll have to ask Odin or Chairman Park Jinseong if they can procure one for me then.”

“Jinseong Group is specialized in IT so they might not have developed a majeong car.”

“Then I’ll have to ask Odin.”

Thinking about racing in Arena in a car, I felt good already.

This was the first time I was looking forward to an exam.

# Chapter 145 – Virtual Space Mastery (Part 2)

---

A few days passed and I heard news that Arena in India has entered South Korea.

The person that called me was the man from before, Krishna.

-I have procured item bags worth 5000 karma.

“Good. As soon as I receive them I will begin treatment.”

-What is the treatment plan?

“I don’t need to personally meet with the patient. The person just needs to eat the flame of life I will provide every day.”

-Can a third party receive and deliver it?

“It doesn’t matter. I don’t know what kind of person this patient is but they can comfortably tour Korea while getting treatment.”

-Very good. Then from now on, every day for the next 2 weeks, I will come to you and receive the flame of life.

“Do so please.”

-Then I will be there soon.

That afternoon I received 20 item backpacks.

I made one flame of life and handed it to Krishna.

Krishna carefully took it and placed it in a large glass bottle.

“Miss Ji-hye, you take some too.”

I handed her 10 item backpacks.

“I don’t want to be a burden to you that way.”

“What do you mean burden. We have to make it to the end together.”

Did my words sound strange?

Cha Ji-hye's face went a little red.

That shy expression. I hadn't seen it in a long while.

"Then, I'll just take six."

"Were you just feeling shy about it just now?"

"No."

"Aww, you were."

"No I was not."

"It is my wish. Acknowledge you blushed."

"I don't want to."

"6 item backpacks are worth 1,500 karma. You can't admit it that as a favor? You are very cold-hearted."

"..... I will give you something else instead."

"I don't want to. Say you were embarrassed."

Ah, how fun.

Not knowing what to do, her eyes darted back and forth. The more I saw it the cuter it became and I thought I could die from it. She always had such a poker face on all the time.

Cha Ji-hye moved her lips slightly and was about to say something.

But when all she had said was 'bu...'\* she shook her head.

(TN: The first syllable of embarrassed.) ".....Yep, I don't want to."

"Okay. Then a different prize."

"Do I have to pay for this?"

"Yes."

"You are a stingy man. Fine, say it."

"Let me cuddle with you for an hour."

Cha Ji-hye's face grew so red it looked like it was about to explode.

‘Huhu, how fun.’

I held in the laughter that was about to burst out of me.

“I can give you a better prize at night.”

“Nope. I want to cuddle.”

Cha Ji-hye had never refused any sexual advances from me.

“Come come, come here.”

“Ugh.....”

Cha Ji-hye came over to me and sat next to me on the couch.

I made her lean her head on my shoulder. Even just this much was plenty embarrassing.

With one hand, slowly, I brushed her hair.

Pat, pat.....

Because of Cha Ji-hye's immensely embarrassed reaction I didn't realize the time passing by.

One hour had long passed but we remained nonetheless.

\*\*\*

I received 14 item backpacks and it came out to 3,500 karma.

“Summon board.”

-Name: Kim Hyun-ho

-Class: 40

-Karma: +10,000

-Mission: rest until the next exam.

-Time limit: 91 days 16 hours

I mastered several skills and still had 10,000 karma!

‘I’m just drowning in it.’

It was good I gifted Cha Ji-hye 1,500 karma.

I wanted to give her more but she refused so adamantly.

I told her I’d give her more too if she let me cuddle her and her refusal became even stronger.. Anyway.....

Two weeks passed.

During that time, I got a call from Odin. It was to tell me had had acquired the majeong vehicle I had requested.

In Korean currency, it cost 12.2 billion won.

(TN: \$11 million USD.)

It was ridiculously expensive but I, of course, had to buy it.

When the Arena in India patient’s treatment was completed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> week, we rode a plane back to Denmark.

Someone rushed to greet me as we arrived at the Nordic exam group headquarters.

“Hyun-ho!”

Johanna Marie swooped in and hung onto me by my neck.

“Did you miss me?”

Marie asked cutely as she hugged me.

Cha Ji-hye was next to me and I tried my best to get Marie off.

But right at that moment, Marie must have sensed something because she looked back and forth between me and Cha Ji-hye.

Marie’s eyes narrowed.

“Strange.”

“What, what is?”

“You two are strange!”

“We are not strange.”

Cha Ji-hye replied in her businesslike tone.

“Something is going on between you two!”

Argued Marie huffing.

“There is not.”

“Something happened!”

“Nothing happened.”

Cha Ji-hye’s solid defense.

Marie kept up her suspicious glare but she gave up since she had no way to further verify her suspicions.

Then Odin appeared.

“You’ve arrived?”

“Yes.”

“I’ve acquired the vehicle you asked for. Let’s go check it out.”

“Let’s.”

There was a parking lot in the back with several cars.

Does everyone involved in the Arena live like this?

Every single vehicle here wasn’t commonly seen on the streets.

Porsche, Ferrari, Jaguar, Mustang. Every single car was expensive and sophisticated.

But even among those, there was a supercar that caught my eye.

A unique looking two person car that looked like a concept car that would be shown at an international motor show.

There were only a seat for the driver and passenger each.

A sports car that looked no longer than 3 meters.

With elegant curves and an agile looking frame, an incredibly chic design!

“Is this it?”



“Yes.”

“Wow.....”

This is the 12.2 billion won car!

“Look carefully.”

Odin opened the car’s hood.

The insides looked similar to a normal car.

But there was one clear difference.

A clear cylinder shaped case in the very center.

The material seemed to be made of plastic and there was majeong placed inside.

Odin opened the cylinder lid.

“You put the majeong in here.”

“Easy.”

“Very. Easy to drive too, would you like to try?”

“I’d love to.”

I hopped into the driver’s seat.

The car was so compact but the inside was actually quite spacious.

Naturally, Cha Ji-hye opened the door to the passenger seat. But then, “Hmph!”

Like an arrow, Marie came in and sat down.

“Race, Hyun-ho!”

A very excited Marie. And Cha Ji-hye,

“.....”

Just stared straight at me.

She, who had always been so tolerant of distractors like Marie and Hyun-ji, had dissatisfaction in her eyes.

‘No compromise with the cat and cars I see.’

Even nowadays if I summoned Sylph, Cha Ji-hye would pet her and play with her for hours.

Seeing as how she bought an exotic white Lamborghini once she came into money, she must really like cars.

I said to Marie.

“Miss Marie, I’ll give you a ride later.....”

“Waahhhh!”

Marie threw a tantrum and began to cry. I hadn’t even finished my sentence!

After a quick thought I gave up my driver’s seat to Cha Ji-hye.

Cha Ji-hye sat in the driver’s seat and, with a satisfied expression, touched the steering wheel.

Marie, as if to pretend she hadn’t cried at all, made a humph face.

After Cha Ji-hye went around the Nordic exam group headquarters at a high speed my turn came.

In summation, it was incredible.

The acceleration was more impressive than the Porsche.

Maybe it was because it used majeong but there was no engine noise. This car was like an assassin moving in the dark.

Cha Ji-hye looked like she looking at my majeong car with envy.

It was the first time I’ve seen her wanting something this much since the first time I showed her Sylph..

“Do you want it?”

“Yes.”

“Then 100 hours of cuddl.....”

“No thank you.”

Pffttt.

\*\*\*

The name of this majeong vehicle was Maglun MSM-2.

“Maglun?”

“It’s a car invented by the Maglun family.”

I see.

With their technological understanding majeong, they made such an incredible supercar. Very much like the Maglun family who was at the forefront of the Arena business.

“That you can take this to Arena and ride this around there, I’m very envious of you.”

Odin really does look jealous.

“Haha, right? It’s the first time I’ve looked forward to an exam.”

“I almost wished to give up a territory for a car like that.”

“Hahaha, that bad?”

“You left how frustrated I was during the carriage ride in the Arena. All because of this lack of good transportation.”

“I did. I really wished I was in a light aircraft then.”

As I was talking I had an aha moment.

“Now that I think of it...would there not be a small plane that uses majeong as fuel?”

At my question, Odin nodded his head.

“I’m sure there is. I have heard that the Maglun family has created one of those as well.”

“If possible, could you get one of those for me as well?”

“That isn’t hard but.....”

“What?”

“..... I’m very jealous.”

Odin looked at me as if to ask if there was any way I could bring one in for him too.

I refused of course because it wouldn’t fit. My virtual space has a limit.

We talked for a long time about the car and we eventually moved onto talking about spy satellites.

“The spy satellite tech that can be used in Arena is nearly complete. I hear that they’re just having some trouble controlling it remotely because of the majeong.”

“But we’ll be able to take it to Arena shortly.”

“Yes. As soon as we send up the spy satellites, finding those six high priests or whatever those bastards are called will just be a time issue. We’ll be able to find some suspicious bastards related to them to narrow down our leads. Then we can chase tail after tail until we grab all six of them.”

“The six high priests probably have something to do with the final mission huh?”

“Yes. Since they are at the center of the evil that is affecting the continent.”

Odin must have just thought of something because he continued on to say.

“But do you know that?”

“What is it?”

“The world of Arena.”

“Yes.”

“Have you never thought about how gravity and the length of a day is the same as our worlds?”

“Ah, now that you mention it I’ve never considered that.”

I had just chalked it up to a comfort the angels provided for the examinees.

Thinking it over carefully, it was an interesting thing.

The fact that gravity was the same meant that mass and volume would be the same as earth.

The fact that the length of a day is the same as earth meant the distance from the sun was the same. It also meant the rate that the world rotated at was the same.

“It’s not only that. If you look at the stars, they are exactly the same as ours as well.”

“Even the constellations?”

“Indeed. That is why I’ve come to a certain conclusion. Arena is another version of our world, thus, I wonder if it is not a parallel world.”

Parallel universes? That kind of thing?

“Basically, another form of our world.”

“Yes.”

“Knowing that, I’ve thought a lot about it.”

Said Odin.

“A point of contact, these exams and examinees, has been created between two worlds that should not meet.”

“.....”

“To our worlds’ various country agencies who cannot physically enter the Arena, they are researching and preparing related businesses.”

“And majeong and majeong related uses.”

“Yes. After there was a point of contact between the two worlds, the similarities between them are increasing.”

Odin continued.

“Don’t you think the two worlds are slowly merging into one?”

# Chapter 146 – Beast (Part 1)

---

Even as I was leaving Denmark, Odin's words kept spinning around in my head.

‘Don't you think the two worlds keep overlapping?’

If that absurd speculation turned out to be true, many things could be explained.

Arena and our world.

The two worlds, through the examinees, are starting to influence each other.

Strong examinees like Odin have important posts in Arena and are influencing the current way of thinking.

And what about our world?

All sorts of different country's organizations are vying for businesses related to Arena.

That essential cause was the exams.

The main principle creators of the exams were gods and angels. There was no way they didn't anticipate this happening.

If that was the case, then what was the point of these exams.

And what about me?

Not just electronics, but I could even transfer living organisms back and forth between the worlds. What is the meaning behind my existence?

I am who I am now due to my rapid growth. If me walking the path of the exams was an arrangement of the gods, the meaning of my growth became much more profound.

All of a sudden, I felt as if the burden of completing all of the exams had fallen on my shoulders.

‘Is this what's known as an overinflated sense of identity?’

I quickly shrugged off that thought.

Having a question without an answer and aching over it. What's the use of doing that.

Having returned to Korea, I called 3rd secretarial Lee Jung-shik of Jinseong group.

-How can I help you?

“Would you be able to procure me a wild beast?”

-..... by wild beast you mean.....

There was confusion mixed in with secretary Lee Jung-shik's voice. Well, that was the expected reaction.

“Tiger, panther, you know something like that.”

Even after I said it I felt embarrassed of myself and continued on to say.

“No need to go to extra lengths for it.”

-If you wish to attain a beast, you will have to contact some dirty markets like Russian poaching organizations.

“There is no need to go that far.....”

-It's not like we have no strings to the Russian mafia, so I will try to contact them.

“Yes, please and thank you.”

-I will bring you news quickly.

It was like this before too but nowadays the secretary has become very sincere towards me.

‘Has Chairman Park Jinseong made him pledge his life to me or something?’

I thought that was probably the case.

Before, when things went awry with the blue house official secretary Kim Byung-ho, it seemed to have bothered him deep



down inside.

Going forward I'm sure my thinking won't change but the better he takes care of me, the more thankful I would be towards him.

\*\*\*

A few days had passed since then. I got a call from Jinseong group.

But the person who called was none other than Chairman Park Jinseong.

-Have you been well?

"Yes, it hasn't been that long since I last saw you."

-Right? Anyway, our talks that day didn't go so well but don't feel bad.

"What do you mean, feel bad. I'm just sorry I couldn't be of help."

-Well, anyway, I've called because of the thing you asked for.

"A beast?"

-You bastard, don't you think it's a bit much?

"Probably, huh?"

-Our Jinseong group has a reputation to uphold, I can't procure a protected animal for you, but I'll get you a male and female pair of hunting dogs.

"Hunting dogs?"

-Yes, you'll be surprised when you see them. They're a very rare breed.

I thought it over carefully.

No matter how good the breed was of a hunting dog, it couldn't beat a beast like a tiger.

Eventually I shook my head.

“No, that’s alright. If it isn’t a beast, there’s no point.”

-Tsk, really?

“It wasn’t something I needed so desperately so it’s alright.”

-If you say so.

After finishing the call, I had to think more about the skill..

How much use will an animal training skill be to me?

‘Should I look over the skill before I decide?’

I summoned my board.

“Show me the animal training skill.”

Then the words wiggled and changed.

-Showing all assist skills related to animals.

1. Animal training (assist skill): gain the ability to tame animals. As the level increases, more complicated orders can be carried out.

\*Entry level 1: Tame one animal (-100)

1. Animal strengthening (assist skill): temporarily strengthen an animal. The strengthening increases with every level of the skill.

\*entry level 1: Increased endurance for 60 seconds (-100) -  
Remaining karma: +10,000

‘There’s only two related skills.’

On top of it, the second skill of animal strengthening wasn’t something really liked.

Having a separate endurance time. That meant every time I fought I have to use the skill.

‘Hold on, I have skill synthesis, don’t I?’

First of all, IF I wanted to train animals, then the animal training was is a skill I had to have.

Should I just get the animal training first and then try to

synthesize it with physical strength buff?

Then wouldn't it maybe create a synthesis skill that gives my animal a physical strength buff?

'Let's try it.'

If I try and it doesn't work I could not waste more karma and give up there.

Even if I fail I'll just be using 100 karma which wasn't a big deal. That much was just the price of gum to me.

"I'll get the animal training."

Pat!

A light shot out of the board.

-Animal training (assist skill): you have attained entry level 1. If you say 'skill verify' you can check all the skills you have.

-Remaining karma: +9,900

'Nice.'

And now I synthesized the skill.

"Skill synthesis."

-Select the skill or item you wish to synthesize.

1. Skills available to synthesize: spirit summons (Sylph), spirit summons (Kasa), physical strength buff, guider, teleportation, visual buffer, animal training.
2. Items available to synthesize: AW50F, Neilson H2 (quantity 2), 357 magnum bullets (quantity 4).

\*Items used for synthesis become used.

'I'll try them in order.'

Since it didn't cost any karma to try to synthesize.

"I'll synthesize spirit summons Sylph with animal training."

-Synthesizing spirit summons (Sylph) with animal training (assist skill).

-Synthesis failed.

“I’ll synthesize spirit summons (Kasa) with animal training (assist skill).

-Synthesis failed.

“Hmph, then I’ll synthesize physical strength buff with animal training.”

And then.

Paat!

-Synthesis success. You have attained growth acceleration (synthesis skill).

-Growth acceleration (synthesis skill): accelerate the growth speed of the animal you are raising. The acceleration of growth differs according to level.

\*Entry level 1: animal is able to reach the limit of their latent ability.

‘Nice!’

Through this, the speed that the beast I raise will grow up will increase.

What would happen if I raised it to mastery?

Incredibly curious, I asked the board.

“Show me the mastered growth acceleration.”

-Growth acceleration (synthesis skill): accelerate the growth speed of the animal you are raising. The acceleration of growth differs according to level.

\*Master: grow up to 3 times the limit. Applies to animals that have completely matured as well.

-To master will use up 5,400 karma.

-Remaining karma: 9,900

‘3 times?’

If I can raise it to 3 times to its current limit that basically means I could turn my beast into a monster.

Think, for example, of a tiger that was 3 times its normal size. At that level, wouldn't it even be able to hunt a troll?

But at the same time, I was skeptical.

‘What use will that be?’

Right.

Even if a tiger grew to three times its size, up against a veteran examinee it wasn't that much a threat.

Even against martial artists with aura mastery like Cha Ji-hye or magicians, they'd be gone in a blink.

‘But I've already got the assist skill so let's try to keep synthesizing.’

“I'll synthesize guider with animal training.”

Pat!

A light shot out from the board.

Success this time too.

-Synthesis success. Animal tracking (synthesis skill) has been obtained.

-Animal tracking (synthesis skill): can order an animal to track. If it smells and object's scent, the object can be tracked.

\*Condition: animal must regard user as its owner.

‘Huh?’

A very useful skill.

On top of that there were no levels.

No need to spend more karma to raise the level. Just like the reload or the tracking perception skills, it was set from the

beginning.

‘That’s pretty good?’

It was possible to track where my target was!

No matter where they were hidden, no matter how far away, I could find them.

‘This skill is a cheat.’

Those 6 high priests bastards. If I could find their clothes or possessions, I would be able to track them down.

‘Let’s keep going.’

This time I’ll try the teleport and animal training synthesis.

-Synthesis success. Call (synthesis skill) has been obtained. Can summon your animal no matter where it is.

\*Condition: animal must regard user as its owner.

A useful skill for someone raising a pet.

This time too there was no skill level.

Outside of that I tried to synthesize the visual buffer and magnums but they all failed.

If I looked at the skills I just got,

-Assist skill: animal training

-Synthesis skill: growth acceleration, animal tracking, call.

Considering I only spent 100 karma, I gained quite a bit.

‘There were lots of skills with many uses, should I invest some karma into raising an animal?’

I hesitated because I didn’t know if it would end up just being a total waste.

I asked Cha Ji-hye and unexpectedly she was all for the animal training.

“The animal training skill, as you raise your level, the number of animals you can train increases.”

Hm?

Listening to it, it made sense.

“If you lead multiple animals, ones that have become stronger through your synthesis skill, I think you’ll be the only power with an animal battalion.”

“That’s true too. Worth a shot then.”

“In the Arena, you can find beasts much larger and stronger than ones from our world, so how about you raise your skill level now in advance to prep for that?”

“Alright. I should do that.”

I carefully allotted my karma.

First, I put 5,400 karma into the growth acceleration and turned it to master.

I put the remaining 4,500 karma into the assist skill animal training!

-3,900 karma into animal training (assist skill) to raise to intermediate level 5.

-Animal training (assist skill): gain the ability to tame animals. As the level increases, more complicated orders can be carried out.

\*Intermediate level 5: tame up to 10 animals. (-100) -Remaining karma: +600

\*\*\*

The time flew by like running water.

A relaxing rest period.

For those 100 days, there was no change with the family.

Noona still had no man and mom, who wanted to close the

business and retire, continued to fry chicken because she had a lingering attachment to the business and she hadn't found an inheritor.

Hyun-ji, who had thrown a fit for wanting to start an online shopping mall, at noona's suggestion (order), was taking a training course on how to run an online shopping mall business.

If she finishes her training and goes into business, noona and I agreed to give her 30 million won each for capital.

(TN: 60 million won is about \$53,000 USD)

If she tries and it doesn't work out, she promised to do as we tell her without a a single complaint.

That was what I predicted would happen. That Hyun-ji would absolutely fail at her shopping mall venture and end up frying chicken.

..... I'll have to call Chairman Park Jinseong and plug her into Jinseong group or something. I felt pity for her and the idea that we would try to force her to do something she hates.

Like that, time flew by and the day for the 9th turn exam came.

"Welcome!"

Welcomed the baby angel, full of smirks and smiles.

"Always unlucky, seeing you."

"Being blunt now I see."

"You would just read my mind anyway."

"Feels different hearing you say it out loud though."

"Oh, good. You look unlucky."

"Hmph, weren't you curious about something? Keep being like that and it'll make me not want to tell you."

"....."



Right.

There was something I wanted to ask this bastard.

## Chapter 147 – Beast (Part 2)

---

“You’re not going to tell me anyway.”

“Aw, you never know.”

The baby angel smiled sweetly.

I hesitated for a moment but thought it wouldn’t hurt to ask.

“By any chance.....”

“Not going to tell you.”

“You fucker!”

I fired my two Neilson H2’s madly. The baby angel, at a speed that couldn’t be seen by the naked eye, swooshed around and dodged them all.

“You damned piece of.....!”

“Just kidding.”

The baby angel removed all joking from his face and became serious.

The baby angel flapped his wings and approached me.

He looked right at me and said.

“What you think is correct.”

“.....”

“The person that is the key to completing the exams? It’s you, examinee Kim Hyun-ho.”

“.....”

“Everything hangs on your decisions. I promise you that. Examinee Kim Hyun-ho’s choice, it will either change everything or change nothing.”

Paat!

The exam door appeared.

The baby angel quietly pointed towards the door.

“Now go. Find your answer.”

“Is there only one answer?”

“Who knows.”

The baby angel continued.

“But there can only be one result. Since there is only one you, examinee Kim Hyun-ho.”

“.....”

Cha Ji-hye opened the door first and went through. I turned my back on the baby angel and followed behind her.

A blinding white light washed everything away from view.

\*\*\*

The room at the inn at the Deport harbor.

The outside was noisy.

‘Right. It was right after we defeated the pirates.’

The people of Deport harbor were euphoric with the joy of victory.

All the past while, the pirates that had bothered them had been overwhelmingly defeated. So of course their pent-up anger was bound to explode in joy.

“Have you checked your exam?”

Asked Cha Ji-hye.

“Ah, I’ll check now. Summon board.”

Pat!

The board was summoned.

-Name: Kim Hyun-ho

-Class: 40

-Karma: +600

-Mission: suppress the pirates

-Time limit: 364 days 23 hours

Suppress the pirates?

I got a feeling of relief.

“Thank goodness, it isn’t a difficult mission.”

Heising and his posse have all died for sure. Just suppressing some pirates will be no problem.

But, the thing that does catch my attention was Lee Chang-wee.

The defeated pirates that returned and Heising’s group that he completely eliminated, there as a good chance that Lee Chang-wee was still at the pirate island.

Probably.

The guider skill showed me which direction Lee Chang-wee was in.

To the ocean.

The exact direction of the pirate island.

“There’s lots of time, shall we wait for now?”

“That sounds good.”

Cha Ji-hye seems to have picked up from my cues that Lee Chang-wee was at the pirate island as well.

Cha Ji-hye made a sudden suggestion.

“Then how about in the meantime you look for beasts to train?”

“Ah, that is a good idea.”

We decided to search for strong beasts that inhabit the kingdom of Aman.

Well, might as well go out for a drive too.

Us having played a pivotal role in the pirates' defeat was well known throughout the harbor.

Gathered in front of the inn, hordes of people were asking to see the heroes.

The inn owner, who was blocking their entry, was pretty great.

“Go out quietly through the back.”

“Okay.”

We opened the window and jumped out.

“Sylph!”

-Meow!

Sylph raised me and Cha Ji-hye into the air.

“Huh?”

“There they go!”

“The heroes!”

“Where are they going!”

“Grab them-!”

From the ground, clambering noises could be heard. But did I hear them wrong? I thought for sure I just heard them say to grab us.

Having escaped out of the Deport harbor, we checked that there was no one nearby and come down to the ground.

“Shall we go for a drive then?”

“Sounds good.”

Cha Ji-hye, who had been petting Sylph, had a look in her eyes. She really does love cats and cars.

“Retrieve, MSM-2!”

Pat!

A compact supercar with a length of 3.3 meters and width of 1.84 meters appeared.

Instinctively heading towards the driver's seat, Cha Ji-hye looked at me then turned around and headed towards the passenger seat.

Cha Ji-hye went around the car once so I squinted my eyes at her and asked.

"You were just trying to drive, weren't you?"

"No."

"You just went around the car to the driver's side."

"I was checking to see if anything was wrong with the car."

"Lies. Your gaze was fixed on the driver's seat."

"I have no reason to lie."

What a talented poker face that doesn't change even when lying.

"I was going to have you drive, oh well. I'll just do it."

"The, um driving, I can do it."

Cha Ji-hye stumbled on her words a bit.

"So you can also means you don't have to?"

"I'll do it."

"No, its alright. I'll just drive."

"....."

Cha Ji-hye glared at me with slightly dissatisfied eyes.

"Do you want to drive?"

".....yes."

Finally, she accepted it.

"Cuddle time, one hour."

“30 minutes.”

“I guess I’ll drive then. I’m looking forward to speeding off road through Arena.”

“..... fine.”

Cha Ji-hye sat in the driver’s seat and I sat next to her and stroked her hair.

Sweeping her smooth hair felt nice.

Good to the touch.

Because it IS so hard to do it made it more special.

Cha Ji-hye , who was usually embarrassed by my touch, was completely immersed in driving instead.

Because of that I could stroke her hair for over 30 minutes. Thanks to the physical strength buff at intermediate level 5, my arm didn’t get tired either.

How far did we race this way?

Right about when I was going to tell Cha Ji-hye to stop, I suddenly recalled the radios.

‘Ah, with the radios, I should talk to some people.’

I took out a radio from the virtual space and made a call.

The other number was the elves.

-Um, so this number is Kim?

I heard the mumbling and flustered voice of the elves’ eldest mother.

“Yes, this is Kim.”

They were still awkward at using the radio.

-Oh my, it really is. Have you been well?”

“Yes, how about The Brown Mountain?”

-We are well of course. Our numbers increase every day. Among us elves, the rumor is spreading that this is a good place to live.

“I see. Thank goodness.”

-This is all thanks to you. But what is it you are calling us about?

“Just checking in and I had something that I wanted to ask.”

-I see. You are always welcome to ask us anything.

“Are there any strong beasts living on Brown Mountain? Not monsters.”

-Of course there are.

“What are they?”

– The tines of a rake eagles inhabit the southernmost territory of Brown Mountain inhabit.

“Tines of a rake eagles?”

“The fiercest birds of prey in the Arena. Very nice.”

Said Cha Ji-hye from beside me.

“Then that’s where we will go. By car, it’ll be quick.”

“Okay.”

It would be a long drive but Cha Ji-hye showed the slightest hint of glee. Probably because she’ll get to drive a lot.

“We’ll be at the Brown Mountain shortly.”

-Oh my, really? How wonderful!

The eldest mother welcomed us joyously. That too made my heart warm.

A place that welcomed me without expecting something of me was a very pleasant feeling.

\*\*\*

We took turns driving and we raced the entire distance.



During the drive, any time we encountered a monster we shot them dead and harvested their majeong to use as fuel.

I don't know if the tires were made of some special material too but even though we were racing through bumpy off roads, the tires didn't take a hit at all. This car cost me 12.2 billion won so it better not be weak.

When crossing borders, I put the car in the virtual space and used Sylph to go up the sky and jump over it.

And then afterwards, took the car back out and drove again.

In two weeks', time we got to the Brown Mountain at the south of the continent.

“Huh? Kim?!”

“It's Kim! How have you been?”

As soon as we got to Brown Mountain, the elves that had been patrolling the area welcomed us.

I spent years with the elves, so I was able to recognize all of their faces.

Pine village, Maple village, Thuja village, I went around and greeted them all, then I arrived at Zelkova village.

“Sylph, Kasa!”

-Meow!

-Bark!

“Now, go play!”

The two spirits shot off into the village.

There was a fuss amongst the village elves. Cute, superior spirits, Kim's spirits, all kinds of compliments came forth.

The young elf children chased after Sylph and Kasa and the adult elves greeted us.

“Kim!”

“Are you back for good?”

“Your wife has come with you I see.”

“Hm? Didn’t he have another wife?”

I shared greetings with the elves and then went to the mothers.

“You have arrived.”

The eldest mother, as the representative, welcomed me calmly.

“I am sorry. I haven’t come back for good, my primary goal is to catch some rake eagles....”

“Yes, you won’t have a problem with that, but still be careful. It is a very strong and ferocious beast.”

“Yes.”

“By the way, the energy of nature within you has grown immensely.”

“Yes, I was lucky.”

“Incredible! Even for us elves, our spirit summons don’t grow as fast as you.”

The mother’s faces were filled with awe and shock.

The mothers really got into the chatting now.

Each mother, one by one, added information about the rake eagle.

It was very disorienting but thanks to them I learned a lot.

Excluding flying monsters, rake eagles were the birds of prey with the biggest bodies.

The reason they had the name of tines of rakes was because of their sharp and strong talons. If you got caught by one of them, even a fairly tough beast’s flesh would be torn apart and killed.

A male and female live together for a lifetime and raised their

young. When the male and female hunt together, they also hunted large monsters.

‘If I just catch the one, I’d feel bad for the rest of the family.’

I decided to capture one male and female set along with all their babies.

“Let’s check it out.”

“Okay.”

If these tines of razor eagles that were strong enough to hunt monsters were to be trained by me, how would they change?

Thanks to my growth acceleration mastery their bodies would grow to three times their normal size and their strength would be increased by three times as well.

With that much strength, it would be enough to easily dominate another examinee!

Cha Ji-hye and I walked towards the southernmost tip of Brown Mountain.

As the scenery of the deep forest of Brown Mountain spread before me, I felt good.

Maybe it was because I was within an area that contained the grand nature of three Trees of Life.

Honestly, I was more comfortable than anywhere else because the energy of nature was constantly filling me with energy.

After walking a long while we arrived at the rake eagle habitat.

“Bbeeeek-!”

“Bbeeeeeeeek-!”

Screeches similar to a hawk rang throughout the sky.

One and all came at us as if they had found some good prey and I thought of using Sylph to catch them all but I stopped.

‘Because I have to catch a whole family.’

It’d be too sad to leave babies without a father and a mother.

Maybe it’s because I lost my father when I was young, but I thought with things like this I’m very tolerant.

I had Sylph envelop us in a strong whirlwind to shield us.

The rake eagles were unable to approach the whirlwind and backed off.

I looked to Cha Ji-hye and said.

“Shall we go look for a nest?”

“Yes.”

We headed on in search of a rake eagles’ nest.

They said normally the nests were built between rocks along the cliff so we should look in that general vicinity.

With a relaxed attitude, we headed on the hunt.

## Chapter 148 – Beast (Part 3)

---

The nest was easy to find.

As we made our way up the cliff side we could see enormous nests scattered here and there.

They had no natural enemy to speak of so that must be why they just left their nests out in the open like this.

As soon as we got close to a cluster of nests, the rake eagles became a lot fiercer.

“Beeeeeek!!”

“Beeek-!!”

But they were unable to approach the whirlwind encircling us.

When we approached to one of the nests, two specific eagles especially begin to scream even louder.

“They must be the owners of this nest.”

Said Cha Ji-hye.

“I think so.”

In the nest were four eggs similar in size to Cha Ji-hye’s head.

Those two rake eagles must be their parents.

“Sylph, go catch those two birds. Capture them but make sure they don’t get hurt.

-Meow!

Sylph went off like the wind.

The wind Sylph made surrounded the two male and female couple rake eagles.

“Beeeeek!”

The birds violently resisted and several times they were even able to rip through the wind. Suffice to show they are the best birds of

prey.

But their opponent wasn't easy.

To birds that ride on the wind, Sylph, the spirit of wind, was as much their natural enemy as any.

Sylph started to carry out the tactical plan I relayed to her through our mind connection.

We made it so that through adjusting the flow of the wind, the rake eagles would be unable to sustain their flight.

Shall we say it's like needing to step on the ground to jump but we've removed the ground from under them?

Eventually the male and female pair who had resisted so fiercely landed on the ground.

I figured this was the best time to tame them and I shouted towards the two birds.

“Animal taming!”

Is this how I use this?

But the rake eagles continued to stubbornly resist.

‘Is it not getting through?’

I was curious why the skill wasn't working.

“Don't you think you should show superiority in order to train them?”

“Should I?”

Based to her advice, I decided to completely subdue them.

I spread the Divine Protection of the Wind and a gust of wind from my fist hit one of the birds hard.

“Bbaaek!”

The bird's neck turned forcefully to the side.

I beat the two rake eagles like this for quite some time.

Every time they tried to flounder and fly away, I had Sylph bring them back down, and I beat them some more.

After beating them a long time and causing them to be exhausted, I tried the animal taming again.

Just then, the birds stopped resisting.

“Lay down.”

I tried giving an order. Then.....

The two birds, their bodies measuring at 120 cm long, just tipped over onto their sides.

‘Whoa.’

At that moment I knew that the animal taming had worked.

“Walk this way.”

The pair of rake eagles jaunted over towards me.

I extended my hand and began to pet one of their heads and they gently accepted. This one is larger than the other, this must be the male.

Cha Ji-hye carelessly approaches the female to tried and pet it and receives a fierce rejection.

Cha Ji-hye hurriedly stepped back when the bird snapped its beak at her.

“You cannot harm people without my permission.”

I gave them a firm warning.

Animal taming intermediate level 5. Where basic communication and commands could be understood and followed.

Cha Ji-hye tried again and this time the female rake eagle didn't resist.

I could see a hint of satisfaction in Cha Ji-hye's eyes.

She just likes all animals I guess.

“This is your nest, right?”

I asked as I pointed towards the nest and two rake eagles nodded their heads.

Then that means these four eggs are this pair’s babies.

‘If I take these babies that aren’t born yet too then that’s 6 of them.’

Through the animal taming intermediate level 5, I could tame up to 10 animals It means the animal training wouldn’t work on animals if I already had 10 tamed.

“I’ll have to look for rake eagles with two eggs now.”

“You are very kind.”

“Ahaha, it’s sad to separate a family.”

For now the first eagles I trained I called number one and number two.

“Number one and number two.”

Cha Ji-hye almost sounded disappointed in me.

“Oh, sorry. My naming sense isn’t very.....”

“Nothing to apologize for.”

“But still, sorry.”

“I think you have no need to apologize to me but if you feel you must I will drive on our way back to Deport harbor.”

“Sure.”

Anyway, the eggs that haven’t hatched yet I decided to name numbers 3 through 6. I’ll name them according to when they’re born.

I had Sylph scout the nests on the cliff side and we found a nest with two eggs.

In the same manner I trained the pair of male and female and I



took their eggs.

To the new family, a male, a female, and two eggs, I named them in order from 7 to 10.

Like that, I had accumulated a total of ten birds.

Among them, six not yet born, I'm thinking of raising them slowly throughout the exams.

\*\*\*

For the rake eagles mating season is nearly the same as egg hatching season.

The mothers of the Zelkova village saw the 6 eggs I brought back and said they think they'll all hatch within the month.

So we decided to stay with the elves on Brown Mountain at least until they were born.

Cha Ji-hye spent most of her time playing with the rake eagles I trained.

But even that got monotonous and we spent time playing tag with the elves among the trees.

"Is it true this is a training method that you introduced to them?"

"Yes. Actually I just taught them to play with the little elves but the effect was good so it got adopted as a training method."

And when we fought with the undead army, the elves saw sure benefits from it.

"I'll do it too."

"Will you be alright?"

"Of course. Physically I'm better off with my physical strength buff superior level 1 than anyone here."

"Alright then."

We took off our synthetic muscle suits and joined in on the adult game of tag trainings.

Cha Ji-hye, even with her being physically superior to everyone on Brown Mountain, was cooked porridge at tag.\*

(TN: Got owned.)

I think because of the unique landscape of moving among trees and the movements and balance that the elves are adept at, she simply wasn't able to adapt.

And me?

Physical strength buff intermediate level 5.

Reflex master.

Dynamic visual acuity master.

What else was there to say?

And through the superior spirit summons plus the power of nature being so dense here, my physical ability nearly surpassed that of Cha Ji-hye's.

No one could catch me and because of that, unlike Cha Ji-hye, I wasn't it once.

Cha Ji-hye must've gotten frustrated because day or night she was training on the Tree of Life.

That must've had had an effect because about half a month into it, the frequency of her being it was significantly lower.

Of course it was only possible because she had the physical ability of physical strength buff superior level 1.

Like that, a month passed by and just as the mothers predicted, the eggs hatched.

From 3 to 6, then 9 and 10, they were born all in a row.

Babies, without much resistance, were easy to tame.

Like that, I hit the limit of 10 with the animal taming intermediate level 5.

But the only problem is that the 6 babies couldn't fly and were limp and lethargic.

“How long will it take for them to grow enough to fly?”

At my question, the eldest mother replied.

“After hatching, it should be about a month before they're able to practice flying.”

“Hm.....”

I pondered for a moment.

Just like this I could put all 10 birds into the virtual space and return to the Deport harbor.

But getting there wouldn't take half a month.

And that's only because we stepped on it all day in the MSM-2 supercar, at an unbelievable speed.

‘The babies could grow during that half month, seems like a waste of that time to just have them in the virtual space.’

If the babies could fly, I wouldn't have to put them in the virtual space. I could just make them fly and follow us.

Then that way even on the way back, the birds would grow.

I voiced my thoughts to Cha Ji-hye.

“What do you think about staying a while longer until the babies can fly?”

“Then let's do that.”

So we decided to stay a little longer at Brown Mountain.

While spending time with the elves, the two sets of rake parents hunted exhaustingly.

The six babies were barely able to walk but every time the

parents came back with food they ran like a horde of starving ghosts were coming after them and devoured everything. They ate as if they were fighting. It almost felt scary.

‘Thank goodness I got the animal taming skill.’

I heard that the raptor eagle babies, with food on the line, would even fight to the death with each other.

It was goosebumps inducing. I think they said that the parents, unperturbed, would feed the dead baby to the living ones?

Thankfully with the animal training intermediate level 1 I could order to the parents and babies and maintain order.

The two sets of parents, without differentiating which baby was theirs, brought their hunts to share with all six babies.

And the six babies didn’t fight with each other as they ate. Of course they did compete with each other on eating speed.

And then when just over a week had passed the babies started to flap their wings and tried to fly up.

Seeing this, the two parent sets began teaching their babies how to fly.

‘Must be from the growth promotion skill.’

Grown acceleration mastery, attained through the synthesis skill.

This skill exponentially sped the growth process and let the animals I’ve tamed grow up to 3 times beyond their species’ limit.

Thanks to that skill the babies have grown up faster.

Because of that growth, they needed more food.

The two parent sets, having to teach them to fly and fetching food, were busy as hell.

I sighed and gave an order.

“Focus on teaching them to fly. I will get you the food. And babies, work hard on your flying practice.”

“Beek!”

“Beek!”

“Beeek!”

The rake eagles replied to say they understand.

I had Sylph hunt and start bringing them their prey.

The male elves that were scouting also found a forest east of the village and gifted it to us.

As the prey was being delivered in abundance, the 10 rake eagles had an explosive growth spurt.

Why 10?

-Growth acceleration (synthesis skill): accelerate the growth speed of the animal you are raising. The acceleration of growth differs according to level.

\*Master: grow up to 3 times the limit. Applies to animals that have completely matured as well.

That part.

Because of the effect that applies to animals that have completely matured.

The two parent sets that are already adults ate plenty and grew too.

According to the skill, the rake eagles will grow three times to the average rake eagle size. If they grow that much they would practically be monster sized.

When one month had passed, the babies got to the level of being able to fly freely.

Thanks to them diligently following my order to practice hard.

“We’ll be on our way now.”

“You’re going to visit again, right?”

Asked the eldest mother with a sad face. I smiled and nodded.

“Yes, if you miss me you can always reach me on the radio.”

“Alright. Take care on your journey.”

“Will do.”

We set on the road again.

Above the supercar racing towards the Deport harbor, ten rake eagles gracefully flew with us.